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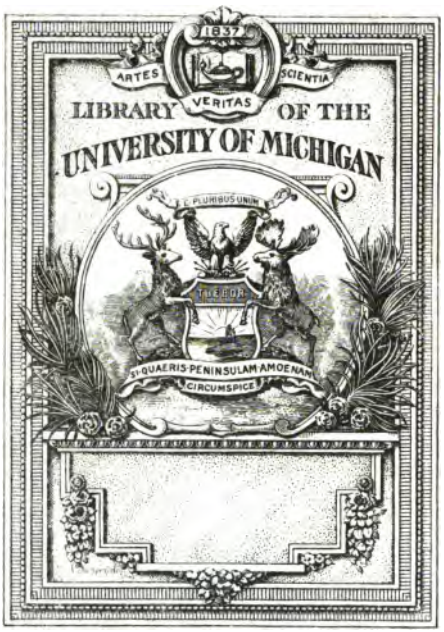
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vol. 14

JESUS OF NAZARETH

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AND

HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see.—LUKE ii. 15.

Tell John what things ye have seen and heard.—LUKE xii. 22.

WILLIAMS & NORGATE,
14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON;
AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.

1881.

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"*For men to be tied and led by authority, as it were with a kind of captivity of judgment, and though there be reason to the contrary not to listen unto it, but to follow like beasts the first in the herd, they know not or care not whither, this were brutish. Again, that authority of men should prevail with men, either above or against Reason, is no part of our belief. Companies of learned men, be they never so great and reverend, are to yield unto Reason; the weight whereof is no whit prejudiced by the simplicity of his person which doth allege it, but being found to be sound and good, the bare opinion of men to the contrary must of necessity stoop and give place.*"
—RICHARD HOOKER, "Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," Book ii., ch. vii., 6.

JESUS OF NAZARETH

AND

HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

"WHY even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Luke xii. 57.) This is the stern question put by Jesus of Nazareth to certain hypocritical persons who were addicted to slight and superficial methods of enquiry, and who neglected the means and instruments of rational investigation. They took notice of outward things, but did not penetrate to inward causes. Their notions of what was right may have been founded upon mere prejudice; evidently they were not the product of judgment. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not?" Why are you satisfied with any outside husk which has come in your way? Questions like this are not asked in these days; rather is it thought a respectable and proper thing to "follow a multitude," not one of whom may have taken the trouble to judge what is right; and it is even regarded as a reprehensible thing to judge anything to be right which is without the sanction of certain special authorities.

What is it that we mean by judging? Is it simply approving what is current? Is it just assenting to particular dogmas because others do so? Or is it not, rather, the asking why they assent, and whether they do so upon grounds which are reasonably convincing? And as we all come of a fallible stock, is it not implied in the

very act of judging that we may go wrong? And are we, therefore, dispensed from judging? May we, on this account, abandon the attempt to judge what is right? *Can* we at all abandon it? If we should determine to do so, and to accept the judgment of some one else—Pope or Council—we have already committed ourselves to the judgment that this particular way is right.

We cannot abdicate the function of judging, though we may exercise it in a blind and perfunctory manner. But then we are told that Creeds and Articles are matters too deep and recondite for the lay intellect, and that the vast apparatus of learning and enlightenment possessed by the clergy is alone sufficient for the explication of these mysterious formulas. And how is this proposition to be made evident? How are we to know that it is right and true? "Why even of yourselves judge ye not?"

At the risk, therefore, of being wrong, we must do our best to judge what is right, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." (Heb. xi. 26.) We take upon ourselves the burden he laid on us; and it is better that we should bear it and stumble under it, even to falling, rather than slavishly attach ourselves to "the fleshpots of Egypt." To judge, is to try—to examine—to consider—and perhaps, after all, to fail; but he who reproached his audience because they did not judge, knew all this, and yet did not exonerate them from the hazard and the toil. And the difficulties are not lighter now. Reward there is none, unless it be internal; of hard words and evil speaking we have enough, if it should happen that the conclusions arrived at do not accord with approved standards. The penalty may be borne. Now let us begin at the beginning.

Belief is a state of mind induced by evidence. As to much the largest quantity of beliefs entertained by human beings, the evidence upon which they are grounded

has been received unconsciously and unenquiringly. A child believes, we may say, instinctively that the persons whom it calls father and mother stand to it in those relations. The question, in fact, never arises in its mind. The impulse to receive with unquestioning faith what it is told is a primitive and needful one, and is exercised without praise or blame. No one would blame a child for believing whatever passed current among those with whom it was brought up. The history of Robinson Crusoe, of Rip Van Winkle, of Jack the Giant Killer, or of Joseph and his Brethren, would be, to a young child, equally credible if each were presented to it with equal gravity and apparent sincerity; and the belief so engendered has to be got rid of, either upon the authority of certain trusted persons, or by an exercise of the understanding. To believe upon evidence of some sort is one of the conditions man cannot escape from. The first intellectual faculty which comes into existence is belief or trust. To the persons surrounding him, a child owes everything he has, and can look to no other or higher source for what he stands in need of. His daily life is wholly provided for by others, his questions are answered by them, he is warned of dangers by them, he is guided and instructed by them, and, in short, is indebted to them for all he has and is. He, therefore, depends upon them, he confides in them, until by intercourse with others he acquires fresh information, which may destroy or confirm the credit of what originally he had relied upon. What is here stated is no peculiarity of Christianised or civilised people; it is true of all mankind. The lowest tribes, of course, remain longest under the influence of the impressions they first received, because there are no others to act upon them, and they are less able mentally to assimilate what is new. Their powers remain dormant, because new circumstances seldom

occur which are likely to awaken a change of thought. Jane Taylor reproaches us for our weakness in this respect. She says—

> "Why is opinion, singly as it stands,
> So much inherited like house and lands?
> Whence comes it that from sire to son it goes,
> Like a dark eyebrow or a Roman nose?
> . . . . . .
> Opinion, therefore—such our mental dearth—
> Depends on mere locality or birth.
> Hence the warm Tory—eloquent and big
> With loyal zeal—had he been *born* a Whig,
> Would rave for liberty with equal flame,
> No shadow of distinction but the name.
> Hence Christian bigots, 'neath the Pagan cloud,
> Had roar'd for 'great Diana' just as loud;
> Or dropp'd at Rome, at Mecca, or Pekin,
> For Fo, the Prophet, or the man of sin."

That this is in the main a true description, few will be found to deny. But the *moral* of it may not by any means be so generally accepted. Opinions and beliefs generated in this way are the staple of what mankind everywhere are influenced and governed by. In the majority of cases, men hold by them with an invincible pertinacity, and they curse or compassionate those who, placed in different circumstances, have become possessed of a different mental furniture.

It is too often forgotten that the constitution of a man, the type and scope of his intelligence, and his capacity to ameliorate and alter the one or the other, are facts of inheritance and organisation, which admit of very little modification by any effort of will. A man can no more think as he likes than he can breathe as he likes. He must breathe as his organisation and his lungs allow; and he must think as his surroundings and constitution have fitted and qualified him to think,

though, by contact with other things, he may modify his condition. As the untaught savage stands upon his native sod, he has no alternative but to believe that the earth on which he is placed is what it appears to be, an immovable structure, and a flat surface. All the true facts relating to it are shut up from him, and can only be acquired from others who have been taught better. He cannot even apprehend the facts intelligently when they are stated to him. He may learn the words, but he cannot picture to himself the relations which are disclosed. He is not to be blamed for this any more than he is to be blamed for not flying. He is no more absolute master of his own mind than he is of his muscles. He can only lift a certain weight, and he has only a certain quantity and plasticity of apprehension; and he possesses only a very, very limited power of receiving new impressions, and of overcoming and obliterating old ones. That a piece of wood rudely carved can be offended and can hurt him, that the entrails of an animal can discover to him events that are coming to pass, or that what appears to be a portion of bread is, in fact, Almighty God, are propositions which, if they have been gravely and systematically instilled into him, acquire an influence over him which, in its origin and growth, was involuntary, and which has created a bias difficult, nay, almost impossible, to counteract.

The beliefs of mankind are thus dependent upon the knowledge and opportunities they enjoy. The beliefs of each generation are the result and outcome of those that have preceded it. The ignorance and the prejudice which have everywhere clouded man's intellectual atmosphere have very slowly and gradually been dispersed, or, rather, are being dispersed. "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people" (Is. lx. 2), and the teachers who should have been foremost in

counteracting this dominion of evil have too often been active leaders in maintaining and propagating it.

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so." (Jer. v. 3.) Prophets, priests, and people combine to vindicate and uphold each other. Their opponents are most likely accounted the off-scouring of the earth. Society is well satisfied with itself; its beliefs and practices have the stamp of authority and respectability, and, with a Pharisaic self-sufficiency, it stands by its prophets and priests; and so, what happens to be popular amongst a chosen people—"my people"—what may be the accepted doctrine of acknowledged prophets and priests, may be, in reality, false and hollow. The approval of a generation, the assent and consent of their recognised prophets and priests, is not a valid verification of a religious creed, which can be honestly impeached in the high court of conscience and of reason. No authority, indeed, can overrule this judicature; for no authority can be constituted, with any defensible title, which has any other source and origin. The authority which is to avail against conscience and reason must itself have the sanction and seal of some conscience and reason which approves itself to the faculties and convictions of men.

We can get no higher. All signs and wonders may be mistaken and misunderstood. They are but impressions of sense; and such impressions—to wit, the motion of the earth, and many other such like things—need to be interpreted, and not until they have passed through the alembic of the mind are they to be relied upon as data of unquestioned validity. The current beliefs inherited by mankind have continually needed revision and correction, and to the end of time this will no doubt be their characteristic. That men should believe something

is a necessity of their position. What they do not know they may believe or hope for: "for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?" (Rom. viii. 24.) So long as it remains true that we "know in part" (1 Cor. xiii. 12), we must, in reference to whatever else affects us and is unknowable, come under the influence of belief. "We know in part, and we prophesy in part." (1 Cor. xiii. 9.) Our knowledge is partial, and so is our faith. The first proposition we admit, the second we may not be clear about. We may, however, very safely put all our attainments and possessions into one and the same category.

Whatever might be the value and authority of St. Paul's prophesying, and whatever was its essence and nature, he acknowledges that it was partial—viz., incomplete—a mere fragment, or portion, of some greater and more comprehensive whole; liable, therefore, to be misapprehended.

A small piece or section of a sphere would give to anyone who saw it for the first time a very imperfect idea of what it was in its entirety; just so with the partial beliefs of mankind. We have seen the perfunctory manner in which they arise; how at first "we see through a glass darkly"—believing all the while that we possess a transparent medium. Gradually we come to discover that the glass is obscure, and we learn painfully to doubt our once confident conclusions. Proof of some kind we always require; only we are satisfied at first with very poor proofs. We believe first and prove afterwards; and in such circumstances the assent to what has been received is easily obtained—it is assumed to be true, it is taken for granted, and is seldom cross-examined.

Like the rest of my fellows, I have had an inheritance of beliefs which for many years gave me no trouble; they were all compact, clear, and convincing. By degrees they came into contact with new circumstances and new

persons, and they lost some of their authority; gradually they became incredible, and the ground upon which they stood crumbled away. With theology proper I did not meddle; mysteries and miracles created no difficulty when they were proved by adequate evidence. It was plain matters of fact that were intractable—things which time does not alter. Men "lived and moved and had their being" two thousand years ago in the same fashion as now; and evidence then was what it is now. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word was established then as now. (Matt. xviii. 16.) Witnesses are persons who hear and see, and their evidence regarding facts is worth much more than that of any other person. When statements disagree, those which are made by real witnesses overrule those which depend only upon hearsay; and this is a condition of things which always existed.

We may believe any facts which are supported by trustworthy and sufficient evidence, but whereever evidence is defective, we are justified in abating or withholding belief. The utmost that any dogmatical teacher can say or do is this: I have investigated these propositions, or some one else has, and upon this investigation or testimony I believe them to be true; and this proof, as thus affirmed by me, is, or should be, sufficient for you. We answer, How am I to know this? How am I to know that I ought to believe what seems to me contradictory upon any mere statement or asseveration of another man of like passions? Supernatural facts are recorded in a book, and are believed upon the evidence of that record. May I not read and examine the record? This, in some quarters, is held to be questionable. Well, but if I may go wrong in my enquiry touching what is contained in the record, may I not equally go wrong in accepting the unverified, written or oral, statement of a

man fallible like myself? True, that his testimony is said to be corroborated and confirmed by a body of men who are called the Church. But here, again, who avouches for this? Who proves this averment? Is it not much more difficult to get at the truth of these very complicated and dubious materials than at the meaning of plain words and simple statements contained in the brief narratives of unsophisticated men? We cannot cross-examine the Church, and no man can produce and condense into perspicuous language the vast and voluminous teachings of the men who have constituted the Church. If the original narratives from which our faith has been derived are clearer and more explicit than the commentaries made upon them, we shall be justified in holding to the one and rejecting the other; or, at any rate, if one set of statements are plain and simple, and the other obscure and vague, we should follow the ordinary course of human action, which adopts the former and eschews the latter.

In the first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel we find these words:—

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily."

The 18th verse describes Joseph and Mary as espoused. In the 19th verse Joseph is designated as her "husband." When, and under what circumstances, the marriage took place is not stated in any of the narratives.

Before making any comment upon them, we may remember that, whoever actually wrote these words, they were not written until at least fifty years after the events which they record had taken place. Jesus himself is supposed to have lived thirty-three years. St. Matthew

was carrying on his business as a publican prior to his becoming a follower and an apostle of Jesus, and Jesus was thirty years of age when he began his public ministry. Matthew, therefore, could not have known anything of the events referred to in his Gospel, which took place at Nazareth and at Bethlehem, before he was born, or when he was an infant.

But the Gospel according to St. Matthew relates events of a plain and circumstantial character, which Matthew may have witnessed, or have heard from those who did witness. These events, therefore, have more of authenticity and evidential value than those which are said to have happened long before, and of which no one was cognisant at the time. We can have no doubt, as a matter of fact, that Jesus lived with Joseph and Mary from his earliest childhood, and if we could know the circumstances of their daily life, we should have the best possible information as to their mutual relations. We should know—not what reports grew up afterwards, but what were the actual feelings and habits that existed and were maintained between them. We should know—not what poets and painters imagined, and not what mystics excogitated, but how a Jewish carpenter and his wife acted towards a very remarkable child. The course of their ordinary life was observed by their neighbours. Their conduct towards their child was as well known as that of any other family in their native village. What they said, and what they thought, and what they anticipated, were as common topics of conversation as were the affairs of others. The neighbourhood knew when Joseph and Mary married; and if at that time there had been anything unusual in the circumstances, it could not have been concealed.

Comparing and analysing the narratives of Matthew and Luke, and reading them as history, not as theology,

under the light of common knowledge and experience, what precisely do they tell us? While Joseph is in a state of doubt and hesitancy, Matthew—verse 20—declares that the angel said to him, "Take unto thee Mary *thy wife*." Luke says, Joseph went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth to be taxed with Mary, *his espoused wife*, being great with child. Luke calls her "espoused wife," although months before the angel had designated her simply "wife." Joseph, it is said, "was minded to put her away privily." The word translated "to put her away" occurs frequently in the New Testament, and, as applied to women, has always reference to the putting away of a married woman. It is sometimes translated "divorce"; we may, therefore, conclude that when Joseph was minded to put Mary away, they had already been married; for it could not be said that he was minded to put her away unless they had previously been married. The perplexity of Joseph is not mentioned by Luke; but, when he first introduces Mary to us, he announces her as "espoused to a man whose name was Joseph." At this period Joseph and Mary were undistinguished from their neighbours; whatever, therefore, would be the judgment of neighbours respecting married or espoused persons would be the judgment of Nazareth respecting Joseph and Mary. We are dealing with the doings of men and women as they live and move and have their being in this world of ours. To judge of the facts fairly we must dismiss from our minds their later aspect, and look at them as they presented themselves to the people of Nazareth well nigh two thousand years ago. People were as well able then to construe and to understand facts of this order as they are now; a jury at Nazareth were as competent to determine a fact of their own common life as a jury in London of theirs. The sum of it then is, that at the moment of her intro-

duction to us, Mary is espoused to a man whose name is Joseph, and is immediately afterwards said to be his wife; so espoused or married, the narrator next tells us, that an angel informs her she shall have a son, and she is represented as replying, "How can this be, seeing I know not a man?" This interview with the angel is not communicated to Joseph, for, though he is minded afterward to put her away, his apprehensions are set at rest by a dream. If there had been no marriage, past or impending, would not Nazareth have shared Joseph's feeling? The marriage covered the birth; without it, Nazareth must have followed the impulse of Joseph, and have put Mary away.

We are justified in applying to this narrative the same tests as we should apply to any other which related similar events; we are not incredulous of facts because they are miraculous. The question is, are certain alleged facts supported by such evidence as the common experience of mankind requires? There is only one fact here claiming to be miraculous; the rest are the every day events of life "known and read of all men." "Registrars of births" are modern officers, but the events which they record, their antecedents, and whatever was connected with them, were matters as much within the knowledge and observation of the people of Nazareth as they are elsewhere. To describe the ordinary facts of life needs no supernatural agency. What we ask is, did a certain event happen? and is it an event which the narrator had the means and opportunity of knowing? Must it have been known, also, to other persons, and is their joint evidence congruous and in agreement? If it is a common event, it passes without enquiry; if it is uncommon, and contrary to all experience, the evidence on which it depends must be conclusive and incontrovertible. A dogma may be a matter of elaborate argument deducible

from recondite and remote premises; a fact of daily human experience can be attested by the plain people who are possessed of ordinary senses, and are able to draw simple inferences; their evidence is just as good, within their range, as that of their betters. Joseph and Mary were simple people like their neighbours; and when they married, if a prophet or an angel had announced to Mary that she should have a son, she could not have replied—no woman so circumstanced could have replied—"How can this be, seeing I know not a man?" The incongruity—nay, the impossibility—of such an answer is patent and obvious. What woman situated as Mary was could have so interrogated a stranger? The angel promised that she should have a son who should be great, should possess a throne, and reign for ever; she did not reply, "How shall this be, seeing that I am poor and lowly?" but "How shall I become a mother?" though she was, or was just about to become, a wife.

There are but two other statements that need notice—the words, "before they came together," and the dream of Joseph. No uncorroborated words, written or spoken, and no dream, would be received, in judicial proceedings, in answer to those facts of universal experience which are bound up with the birth of a child; and judicial proceedings are those highest acts by which the rules of human wisdom and experience are applied to elucidate and direct human affairs. A narrative that offends against these rules cannot appeal to another jurisdiction of larger and more competent authority.

Let us now follow the narrative. Let us ascertain how all the parties introduced to us behave under the circumstances. Let us transport ourselves to Nazareth. Let us listen to the conversations that are reported. Let us observe the action and attitude of the persons concerned.

Let us put the plain and natural construction upon their words and conduct, and let us then abide by the impression which all these things leave upon us—disregarding the theories and ideas which at a later period came into being. How did Joseph and Mary, whilst he lived under their roof, speak of Jesus? In what terms did the writer of the narrative refer to him, and how did his friends and acquaintance regard him? The answers to these questions ought to throw some light on matters vitally interesting to us all, and no better evidence is attainable or possible respecting them. In the first place, we ask, how is the statement respecting the angels and the shepherds at Bethlehem consistent with later events? The shepherds are said "to have made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning the child, and all that heard it wondered at those things which were told them." (Luke ii. 18.) Public attention was, therefore, called to the circumstances of Jesus's birth at the time. These reports, and the circumstances so made known, must have created a permanent and abiding interest in the person so distinguished. He could not sink down into a common person. The shepherds—who came into Bethlehem, made known abroad what they had heard and seen, and excited wonder in all who listened to them—could not return home as if nothing had occurred.

The name and fame of Jesus could not have been obscured. The multitude of the Heavenly Host must have made a deep and lasting impression on all who saw, or heard of, and believed it. If it were known at the time, it must have arrested attention, and fastened it on the person of Jesus. He could not have returned home like another child. Bethlehem would have been stirred to its depths at the announcement—the good tidings of great joy. But we never hear again that these events

were further taken notice of in Bethlehem, or that the good tidings and the great joy had any effect upon the people of that town. Yet surely, if so grand a scene was witnessed, if such wonderful words were spoken, and such prospects opened out, the child who was the subject of all this marvellous revelation would never again have been lost sight of, and would not have been allowed to mingle in the crowd and to pass into obscurity.

Besides this, wise men from the East hear of his birth; Herod hears of it, and is troubled; and all Jerusalem with him. (Matt. ii. 4.) There is the star, the gold, frankincense, myrrh, the wise men falling down and worshipping, and yet we are not informed that any further result followed from these events. No expectations were raised; no persons concerned themselves further about Jesus. Joseph and Mary return to Nazareth, and there is nothing in the narrative which shows that any further enquiries were made about Jesus by the people of Bethlehem; or that the friends and neighbours of Joseph and Mary, at Nazareth, had any knowledge of what had taken place at Bethlehem; or were made acquainted with the visit and gifts of the wise men of the East; or with the appearance and utterances of the angels. Surely some report of these great events must have preceded them, and the interest of their friends and neighbours have been aroused. They would have been anxious to see the gifts which had been presented; they would have been anxious to hear what had been done and said by the angels. Such visions of angels were not common things. Wise men could not come from the East under the guidance of stars, and bring with them gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, without its being noised abroad—in fact, the narrative distinctly says the shepherds "made it known abroad." Is it not, then, strange that events of such

an order made no impression upon the people who witnessed them, and upon those who were made acquainted with them?

We are ignorant, and "know only in part." We cannot, therefore, say in regard to past events what is possible or otherwise; but we do know what wonder means—it is an emotion which has been felt by all men; and we know what it is to make a thing "known abroad;" and we know that if any astonishing circumstance affecting both eyes and ears comes to pass, and is "made known abroad," and excites popular wonder, the impression is not likely to fade away. And if it should be connected with some particular person, and should be the revelation and assertion of some marvellous destiny and greatness which is to befall him, the wonder would not die out, but would follow him through his after years, and would prevent him ever becoming, or being spoken of, as an ordinary man.

How different from all this is the history of Jesus. He returns from Bethlehem, and from Egypt, he takes up his abode at Nazareth, and not one word is said to indicate that more was expected of him than of his neighbours, or that there was anything in his history which marked him out or distinguished him from them.

Following the narrative, the first event we meet with which throws any light upon the subject is related in Luke ii. 41, where it is said, "his parents went to Jerusalem every year." Joseph and Mary are by the historian denominated his parents. If the fact were not so, the statement is misleading; and if anyone objects that it is a statement which has to be accommodated, and should not be construed literally, the answer is, that other facts and beliefs are set up and substantiated by the literal interpretation of words, which, it may be contended,

are figurative. And, again, when the question is, What were the impressions abroad respecting some particular person? surely the words spoken by those who knew him are very cogent evidence. Taking them, however, for what they are worth, they prove that, when writing in an unconstrained or historical manner, the historian mentions Joseph and Mary as the *parents* of Jesus.

But there is confirmatory evidence of the most decisive character in connection with the same event. Mary, addressing Jesus, on this particular occasion, says—"Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." Suppose these words of Mary are not allowed to be conclusive, they prove this, at least, that Mary spoke of Joseph as the father of Jesus. They prove, indisputably, that the child Jesus was recognised as the son of Joseph, for his mother so designates him; and, if he were so, this is natural; and if it were not so, it would be unnatural. Whether we choose to make little or much of this evidence, it must be said that no other species of evidence is available; and that no instance can be produced in which Mary is represented as having asserted a different state of things.

If it could be proved that Mary had at any time asserted what the narrator has related of the circumstances which preceded the birth of Jesus, very much would, very properly, be made of it. If it could be proved that the "kinsfolk and acquaintance" of Joseph and Mary (Luke ii. 44) had been informed that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, and if facts proved that, as a child, he was not recognised or known as his son, it would be a strong confirmation of the narrator's story of his supernatural birth. But the evidence is the very reverse of this. Of all things in the world, the most important to be known was that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, and yet the

historian here mentions Joseph as his parent. Mary herself calls him his father. For the purpose in view, evidence cannot go beyond this.

In reference to this history there are two contingencies possible. The one, that Joseph and Mary should have stated the supernatural circumstances as set down by St. Matthew; and the other, that they should have allowed Jesus to grow up and be recognised as their own son. If, in truth, he were not their son, then to allow their neighbours to remain under a false impression was to conduce to, and to connive at, falsehood; but if he was their son, their conduct was natural and reasonable, and any other conduct would have been a deliberate imposture. We shall see, as we go on, from the result of their actions, that only one construction can be put upon them—they treated Jesus as their son. Their neighbours saw it and knew it. It is not necessary to say that no child could be born in a supernatural manner "for we know" only "in part;" but we may safely say that no child could be so born—among a woman's own people, and in a small community—without its being known and noticed at the time; that women of blameless character, living in reputable circumstances, in a small community, under the eye of their neighbours, cannot have a first-born son, in an irregular manner, without its being known. If the circumstances are such as redound to the honour of the woman, and are believed by her to be fraught with blessing to her people and the world, and if she is so confident of this that she publicly asserts "all generations," on account of it, "shall call me blessed"—she could not be a party to the concealment of the true fact; she could not allow her son to grow up as the son of her husband; she could not lend herself to the propagation of what was untrue; she could not publicly, and without remonstrance, permit the true facts of the birth to be obliterated, and an

utterly erroneous impression to get abroad and take its place.

Yet, when Jesus is twelve years of age, his mother addresses him as the child of Joseph—"Thy father and I have sought thee." Between this twelfth year of Jesus and his thirtieth year we have no event of his life recorded, but it is quite clear that no new impression of his birth had grown up. Turning to John's Gospel, we find in the first chapter an account of his introduction to his first follower:—"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (John i. 45.) Not the son of Mary, by a supernatural birth, but the son of Joseph. Evidently, therefore, at the time, this was the public and recognised impression, or how should Philip assert it? Shortly afterwards we are told by Luke (ch. iv. 16) that Jesus "came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up," and spoke in the synagogue, and the people wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, and they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Can anything be conceived more natural than this? Jesus had been "brought up" among them; they had known him from his youth, and all his life long, as the son of Joseph. Plainly they had never heard of any supernatural birth, of the Heavenly Host at Bethlehem, of the gold, frankincense, and myrrh, of the wise men from the East, or of the guiding star. Jesus had lived amongst them as the child of Joseph and Mary. "Is not this Joseph's son?" was their first exclamation. Is it possible that any other parentage had been heard of? Jesus says to his former friends and neighbours, "No prophet is accepted in his own country." And why? Because in his own country his origin, his daily walk, his intercourse with his friends, and the common-places of his life, are remembered, and it is hard to understand how his new

pretensions and powers have been acquired, or can be genuine.

The people of Nazareth had known Jesus as one of themselves, as a carpenter. They had heard of what had been done in Capernaum, and they said, with the utmost apparent simplicity and good faith: "Is not this Joseph's son?" They asked for no wonders to be performed; but, in reply to their question, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Jesus said to them—not, You are mistaken, I am not Joseph's son, but—"Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself. Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here, in thy country." They had not said this, but, in response to their question, Jesus suggests this as their state of mind: "Ye will surely say, knowing as you do who I am." After this, it is said, they were—one sees not why—"filled with wrath." So far as we can see, they had not acted blamably. A person who had grown up from boyhood to manhood, under their eye, as the son of one of their neighbours, had unexpectedly assumed the character of a "prophet" (verse 25); and they asked: "Is not this Joseph's son?" What we are concerned with is the fact that at Nazareth, where he had been brought up—brought up meaning where he had lived until manhood—had been daily seen and spoken to, he was known only as Joseph's son. No one remembered any story of a supernatural birth, which might have accounted for the phenomenon of his prophetic character. No, here, in his own country, among his own people, until he commenced his public career, he was known only as Joseph's son. Jesus himself has told us: "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place; neither under a bushel, but on a candle-stick, that they which come in may see the light." (Luke xi. 33.) And we may be quite sure that an event so surpassingly important as his

own parentage and supernatural birth would not have been put in a secret place or under a bushel. He affirms that no man does such a thing.

In the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew, we read of Jesus being again in "his own country;" and his neighbours, the people who had been acquainted with him all his life, are represented as asking—"Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren James and Joses, and Simon and Juda? And his sisters are they not all with us?" A perfectly natural enquiry; proving beyond all doubt that, in his own country, there was no knowledge of any mysterious or supernatural birth. He was the son of Joseph and Mary. In the sixth chapter of St. Mark, there is a reference to a visit of Jesus to his own country; and, with a slight variation, the same circumstances are repeated—"Whence hath this man these things? And what is the wisdom which was given unto this man? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses, and Juda and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him." Can any conduct be more natural, when all the events of a man's life are familiar to them? But if the circumstances of his supernatural birth had been known, how natural it would have seemed that he should be thus distinguished from the crowd.

The genealogy in Matthew's Gospel, if read simply, and without bias, leads also to the conclusion that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary. These are the words (Matt. i. 16): "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." The antecedent of "whom," in such a recital, is, naturally and inevitably, the husband and the wife, whose names are mentioned together.

Once more, the only other Gospel which contains the

genealogy brings its quota of evidence to the same effect. The twenty-third verse of the fourth chapter of St. Luke asserts—"Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph." "As was supposed" looks much like the marginal note of some copyist introduced into the text. Why, also, the marks of parenthesis? The word "supposed" is in the original the same word as is elsewhere translated "think" —"Think not I am come to destroy the law," &c. The expression, therefore, means that during his lifetime Jesus was thought to be the son of Joseph. Could any fact be more conclusive as to his parentage? The historian himself admits that the impression which existed during the lifetime of Jesus was, that he was the son of Joseph. The impression would only be derived from facts calculated to produce it. The actions and the words of Joseph and Mary, the actions and words of Jesus himself, must have combined to create the impression which prevailed. The events themselves are not of a nature to admit of secrecy or disguise.

If a promise had been made to Mary by some mysterious messenger, that she should be the mother of the great national deliverer whose advent the Jews anticipated, she would surely have called together her friends and neighbours, that they might rejoice with her, not on her own account, but on account of her people and country. The throne of David filled the Jewish imagination with visions of conquest and glory; and the Jewish woman who possessed indubitable evidence that she was the favoured individual through whom her race would be restored to its ancient splendour would not put her light under a bushel, but on a candlestick. Besides, the events at Bethlehem would speak, trumpet-tongued, of some great destiny in store for the child, whose birth had been celebrated there. The news would

travel to Nazareth and rouse expectations. After the wonders of Bethlehem, Jesus was taken to the temple, and Joseph and Mary "marvelled" at the words spoken by Simeon. How could they marvel, if they remembered the angel Gabriel and Bethlehem?

When St. Paul defended himself before Agrippa and Festus, he appealed to the publicity of certain events as proof of their authenticity—"This thing was not done in a corner." But this thing, the most wonderful of all, has not one fact in the entire subsequent history of Jesus, as related, which supports or confirms it. The generation contemporary with him knew nothing of it; they "supposed," his biographer assures us, that Jesus was the son of Joseph. And such a supposition, prevailing everywhere, and contradicted nowhere, is evidence which in such cases is absolutely final and conclusive. The reputed parents of a child, who live amongst their own people, and about whom no mystery exists whilst they live, cannot be deprived of their parental character by later writings, without the production of plain, unequivocal, and overwhelming proof. The rules which determine the parentage of children have been long ago settled and ascertained. Courts of law have had to deal with such questions in innumerable instances. Was such a person the child of certain parents? is a question which has been often enough asked. Men have had to unravel tangled statements on this subject many a time and oft; and they have come to an agreement as to what circumstances may be relied upon, and what should be distrusted.

The very foundations of civil society are concerned in the facts involved in such questions. The actions of parents and children, and neighbours and friends, have all been observed, and the value of them has been thoroughly appraised. Craft and fraud may succeed occasionally in

throwing a veil of mystery and doubt over the birth of some particular person, but the plain, practical doings of ingenuous persons are not to be mistaken. The transactions of twenty or thirty years, pointing to a simple conclusion, are not to be set aside upon the statement of men who might not have been born when the transactions occurred, who had no personal knowledge of them, and whose other statements are wholly at variance with them. Hearsay evidence, supported by no facts, but contradicted by the conduct and acts of all persons concerned, has no evidential force or value.

In the first volume of Grote's "History of Greece," page 472, 2nd ed., is the following note :—

"Plato passed among a large portion of his admirers for the actual son of Apollo, and his reputed father Aristo, on marrying, was admonished in a dream to respect the person of his wife Periktione, then pregnant by Apollo, until after the birth of the child Plato."

We do not pause upon this piece of history and believe it, because people once did so; it seemed to them possible; it seems to us impossible; and we do not trouble ourselves about it. We do not think it necessary to test the miraculous stories current in ancient mythologies; yet they have been believed, and were at one time, by some people, deemed as credible as the miraculous stories which obtain general credence. To the ignorant people who first hear it, one miraculous story may seem as probable as another, and all sorts of events stand upon the same level. Amongst a credulous people improbabilities are entirely disregarded, and they are ready to accept any story without enquiry, and without distrust; it is only experience which enables them to separate what rests upon real evidence from what rests upon none. The question to be asked is not whether such and such an event could happen, but whether there is any real, valid evidence that it did happen.

In the lifetime of Jesus there was plainly no expectation that he would become the founder of a new religion. We have the means of ascertaining what impression was made upon his disciples and apostles by their intercourse with him. We can tell what they thought; and the evidence of what they thought is of far more value and weight than the thoughts and beliefs of men who lived hundreds of years later. I appeal only to the testimony of the Evangelists. I ask what it is they tell us of the doings and sayings of Jesus? I ask how the events of his life acted upon and influenced the people who witnessed them? And I venture to say, that the contemporaneous observations of men who saw and heard what is recorded are worth infinitely more than reports of unwitnessed events, which are wholly uncorroborated; or, rather, which are contradicted by every account that should confirm or illustrate them.

At thirty years of age, St. Luke informs us that Jesus "was supposed" to be the son of Joseph. This is not a supposition or thought which could have sprung up without evidence. When a royal child is to be born, the greatest care is taken that evidence of his birth shall be unimpeachable and complete; and no child, brought up from his birth in a carpenter's home, and whom every neighbour had known and recognised from infancy as the carpenter's son, could pass into a royal household as of legitimate and royal descent, if no person and no particle of evidence were produced to prove the fact. That a man was all his life supposed to be the son of certain persons by those amongst whom they all lived, is evidence not to be controverted, except by similar evidence of greater weight and conclusiveness.

If we were called upon by any court to determine an issue relating to the birth and parentage of a man, which

had to be ascertained after his death; and if it were proved that he lived from infancy in the midst of a small community, as the child of parents, members of this community, natives of the same place, and well-known there; if it appeared that his mother publicly recognised her husband as the child's father; if the neighbours testified that they had known the child from his infancy as the offspring of these parents; if he had, to their knowledge, lived with them as one of their children until he grew to manhood; if he had afterwards occupied a public position, and had become the acknowledged founder of an important religious body; if his first friends and followers had recognised him in some distinct manner as the son of these parents; if he were publicly challenged, by those who had known him all his life, as their son; and if it were admitted by his most eminent biographer that, during his lifetime, a certain man, who lived with his mother, was regarded as his father—such impression, and such facts, would assuredly overrule, in the mind of every impartial juror, any statements of an opposite or inconsistent character. If testimony, in any case, is to determine fact, no one could for a moment doubt in this instance upon which side the testimony preponderated. Whoever, without prepossessions or prejudice, came to determine such an issue, could feel no doubt respecting his verdict.

If the apostles and disciples of Jesus had known that his parentage was such as one or two verses represent it to be, they must have expected of him much greater things than they actually did. If they had known what is said to have passed between the angel and Mary, if they knew what is said to have occurred at Bethlehem, they could not have been uninfluenced by it; they must have believed that Jesus was a much more extraordinary person than they judged him to be.

The two greatest events in the history of Jesus are his birth and his death. There is nothing in the history which indicates that his disciples, who during three years lived with him, and heard his teaching, had any other belief than that he was born as other men are. Their words and actions furnish no evidence of a contrary belief. What was the view, then, which they entertained of his death? The Evangelists tell us that Jesus predicted to his disciples the manner and circumstances of his death; that he foretold how, and by whom, he should be slain—not in any slight and trivial, but in a most formal and deliberate manner, which could not fail to produce in the hearer's mind a deep and abiding impression.

The three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, give the details in nearly the same words. Matthew says (ch. xvii. 22, 23): "While they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again; and they were exceeding sorry." Mark says (ch. ix. 31, 32): "He taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him." Luke's version (ch. ix. 44, 45) is: "Jesus said unto his disciples, Let these sayings sink down into your ears, for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying." The same warning is given on a later occasion, which Luke thus records (ch. xviii. 31, 33): "Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be

mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things. And this saying was hid from them. Neither knew they the things which were spoken."

Substantially the same statement is made by Matthew and Mark, but there are slight discrepancies. Matthew informs us they were exceeding sorry; while Mark and Luke affirm they did not understand what was said to them. The words seem very plain, and represent actions not easy to mistake or to misapprehend. There yet is one other occasion on which this same warning is given, and the same three Evangelists repeat the circumstance, and this is added: "Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan."

There are thus separate occasions on which Jesus informs his disciples of his death and resurrection in an unambiguous and distinct manner, with accompaniments which could not fail to arrest their attention. He rebukes Peter by an indelible word—Satan; the disciples are told to let his sayings sink down into their ears; he took the twelve apart on the way while he made this communication to them, and commences with the exclamation, "Behold." He employs every method which would give force and effect to his words, and yet Mark and Luke, who did not hear them, assert the disciples did not understand what was said; whilst Matthew, who may be supposed to have been present, says "they were exceeding sorry." If they did not understand, how could they be exceeding sorry? If they did not understand, how did Peter come to say, "Be it far from thee, Lord," and to rebuke him? And how could Jesus reply—"Get thee behind me, Satan?" If the words, as recorded in the

Gospels, were spoken, if the intimations were given, men of the most ordinary faculties must have understood them; and if proof were wanting, it is furnished by the adversaries of Jesus. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew, and at the sixty-third verse, these words occur—

"The Chief Priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again: Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first."

Can any statements be more incomprehensible than these? The disciples are forewarned of certain facts which are shortly to come to pass; and this is done in words the meaning of which is clear and plain, and they so far comprehend them that they are said to be very sorry; and yet all the while, we are told, they did not understand them, although the adversaries of Jesus, having heard them in some far less formal and impressive manner, remember them, and propose that precautions should be taken on account of them. The chief priests and Pharisees had not seen the wonders wrought by Jesus; they had not heard the "gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth;" they had not travelled with him by day and night, and seen the waves of the sea stilled at his word, nor the dead return to life at his command; and yet they remember some few pregnant words uttered by him, which had come to their ears. They take notice of them, and understand them, and act upon them; whilst his disciples — nay, his twelve favoured apostles—to whom they were distinctly and emphatically addressed, under circumstances so sad and so impressive that they were made very sorry, did, nevertheless, fail to understand them, or attach to them the slightest importance. The chief priests, on the contrary, are said

to have been put on their guard by the recollection of the words which they had heard, or heard of; while the apostles, who were made very sorry by them, forgot, and utterly overlooked and disregarded them.

This assertion is not made without adequate evidence. I need not repeat the events of the crucifixion; but ask, what was the conduct of the apostles and of the women, after Jesus was taken down from the cross? Remembering the many mighty works which he had done in their presence, remembering what is said in the narrative of his relationship with God, remembering all that the apostles had heard and seen, according to the Gospel narrative, one would imagine that the men and women who had seen and heard Jesus as they had, would have expected him to baffle the vengeance of his enemies, would have looked for his return from the grave. Let anyone read what is to be found in the Gospels; what is said by Jesus himself, of his kingdom, of his power and divinity; and then let him recollect that the persons who had been with him during all his public life, and whom he called not servants, but friends (John xv. 10), heard all this—moreover, are represented as believers in him—and yet after he was crucified they consigned him to the tomb without any hope or expectation that they would see him again alive. "Then they took the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury." (John xix. 40.) "The women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and where the body was laid; and they returned and prepared spices and ointment." (Luke xxiii. 55.) "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices that they might come and anoint him." (Mark xvi. 1.)

It is quite clear that the myrrh, and aloes, and spices,

and ointments, were to be applied to the body of Jesus, "as the manner of the Jews is to bury." He was buried, in all respects, as other Jews were, though it might be with greater reverence and affection. But there was not a thought of his returning to life. They were preparing to embalm his body, according to the custom of the Jews. And, though it is represented in the narrative that these persons had seen him raise Lazarus from the dead, and had heard the wonderful discourse in the eleventh chapter of St. John, they proceed to dispose of the body as the manner of the Jews is to bury. He was dead; "and a great stone is rolled to the door of the sepulchre, and they depart." (Matt. xxvii. 60.) Is it possible to believe that the persons who witnessed all that is related of Jesus in the four Gospels could have consigned him to the tomb, and embalmed his body, as that of a mortal friend? Yet that they did so is as clear as words can make it. Must we infer that the discourses which we read in the Gospels were not spoken as we can find them? Beyond all doubt, they were written many years after they were said to have been spoken; and the proved actions of the apostles and friends of Jesus, after his death, are entirely inconsistent with their having heard what we now read. Again and again, in the Gospels, we read that persons did not believe in Jesus; though it is not anywhere said what it was they did not believe. The presumption, of course, is that some other persons did believe; though what their belief was is nowhere specifically stated. Peter asserts his belief of something respecting Jesus, and Mary also; but, whatever it might be, it was consistent with a belief of the ultimate mortality of Jesus. The affection of the women would have quickened their hopes, if they had ever heard any words which indicated that Jesus was not mortal, like themselves. But their only thought

is, "Who shall roll us away the stone; for it was very great." (Mark xvi. 3, 4.) Everything indicated their belief in his final departure. Up to the time of his death, not one of them could have believed that he was "equal to the Father as touching the Godhead." The whole course of his life was before them — far, far more than we read in the Gospels; for St. John assures us, "There are also many other things which Jesus did; the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John xxi. 25.) And yet it is evident beyond all controversy that he was buried as were other men, "as the manner of the Jews was;" his friends and followers rolling a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, to secure it against intrusion; leaving it, at the same time, accessible for the further anointing and embalming.

More conclusive evidence it is not possible to have of what the friends of Jesus, and his apostles, thought concerning him when he was taken down from the cross. Strong and irresistible as is this evidence by itself, it is confirmed by that which follows. When it was announced "unto the eleven, and to all the rest," that Jesus had risen from the dead, "the words seemed to them as idle tales; and they believed them not." (Luke xxiv. 9-11.) Can any language convey a stronger impression of the incredulity of the persons referred to? The eleven, and all the rest—we know not, how many—regarded the announcement of the resurrection of Jesus as an "idle tale." How could eleven men hear and see what it is alleged they had heard and seen, and yet treat the announcement of the resurrection as an "idle tale"? Let anyone try to put himself in the position of these eleven apostles. Let him imagine himself to have been for three years the companion and

friend of such an one as Jesus; performing miracles himself, by power derived from Jesus; seeing miracles, moreover, marvellous in their character, performed by Jesus; and hearing him give solemn assurances that he should shortly be crucified, and, within three days, would rise from the dead. Let him imagine that such has been his experience; and then let him further imagine that the crucifixion has taken place, as was predicted. Could he then imagine himself so unbelieving that he would bar the tomb in which his "Master and Lord" was laid by a great stone; and afterwards, when he was told of the resurrection, that he could regard it as an "idle tale"?

If the apostles could deliberately regard the resurrection as an "idle tale," how are others to believe it? It is possible in certain cases that the reality of death may be only apparent, and be actually an illusion; some great shock to the nervous system may be mistaken for death; and, in all good faith, plain persons, ignorant of the laws of life, may mistake syncope for death. Our experience tells us that unskilled persons might easily mistake the appearance of death for the reality. For instance, a drowned person might seem dead whilst animation was only suspended. Those who had not seen such a restoration would not anticipate it, and would not, if it occurred, know it to be possible. We know that a person so drowned, and apparently dead, might return to life again, to the amazement of ignorant beholders, who might, in perfect good faith, believe that he had been recovered from actual death. There are unmistakable signs of death known to the instructed, but the signs recognised by uninstructed persons may be fallacious; and, therefore, without concluding anything as to particular cases, one may say, generally, that a person need not be accused of falsehood

or misrepresentation who reported a resurrection, which, on more accurate investigation, might turn out to be only an apparent one. We must know all the conditions before we can assert that a certain physical event is possible or impossible.

If we were told that a man claimed divine attributes, and performed miracles, as the evidence of a divine mission; and if he had a select band of followers, who were said to believe in him; and if he had assured them with great solemnity that he should shortly be crucified, and would rise from the dead on the third day; and if, after he was crucified, he was consigned to the tomb as other men are, and a great stone rolled to the door of his sepulchre—it is clear that his followers could not have believed what he had said to them of his rising from the dead. And it is plain that, possessing the special Jewish belief respecting the God and Father of their nation, they could not have believed that the friend whom they had buried with the rites and ceremonies of their country was "equal to the Father as touching the Godhead." To the last moment of his life, and after his death, the apostles and the women, so affectionate and so assiduous, believed in the final and irrevocable death of Jesus. They could not, therefore, have believed respecting him what is asserted in the Nicene Creed.

It is no question of moral delinquency; of failure under temptation to sustain rectitude of conduct. It is nothing of this kind. With the possible partial exception of Peter, all of them are in the history classed as believers, and the question is, what was the nature and substance of their belief? Was it merely that of men who asked, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel?" Peter says, "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have there-

fore?" (Matt. xix. 27.) Did their expectation rise no higher than this? Was it some temporal advantage for which they were looking? It seems to be so. When the great words which they are said to have spoken come to be interpreted by events, they shrink into very small dimensions. The confessions which are found in the history, when they are translated into actions, lose their grandeur. Can it be the same individual who asserts, "We believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God"—who, within a few short days, declares, "I know not this man"? That he must have uttered a falsehood is plain. But what—when he spoke it—was the value of the first confession? What in his mouth did it mean? It was most probably written down well nigh a hundred years after it was spoken.

There is evidence of another sort to be considered. In the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, and the sixteenth verse, we read:—

"The eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. They saw him and worshipped him, *but some doubted;* and he said, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them, &c., teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Peter was of the eleven, and must have heard these words if they were so spoken. We turn to the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, containing the history of Cornelius, and we find Peter is represented as addressing these words to Cornelius:—

"Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

How had this been shown to him? By a strange vision. Peter evidently did not remember the words of Jesus—his last words—directing him to teach all nations

—"to preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark xvi. 15.) He takes no note of this injunction. The vision he attributes to God. The command of Jesus—introduced by the solemn words, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations"—does not dissolve a Jewish bond. Peter says, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The words spoken by Jesus some years before, although so large, and comprehensive, and unequivocal, had not taught him this; it remains in Peter's apprehension unlawful for him, a Jew, to come unto one of another nation, although the last words of Jesus were, Go and teach all nations. Is it possible that when he visited Cornelius, he believed that Jesus was equal to the Father as touching the Godhead, and that his command was sufficient to absolve him from a Jewish obligation?

We ask, as we read the narratives contained in the Gospels, what was the belief respecting Jesus of Nazareth entertained by those devoted disciples who left all and followed him? What was the belief of those women who ministered unto him with so much zeal and affection? Peter is represented to have said—"We believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John vi. 69.) Martha is represented as saying—"I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." (John xi. 27.) "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever." (John xii. 34.) The people seem to have had some worthier apprehension of Christ than the apostles. They had heard that he abideth for ever; but immediately after we are told (verse 37), "yet they believed not on him."

We are not informed what it was they did not believe. When Peter's belief is put to the test, it is not found to

have any reality in it. In the presence of danger, that he should screen himself by a falsehood is intelligible; that he should begin to curse and swear, and to say, "I know not *this man*" (Mark xiv. 71), is remarkable; but that he should ever have believed concerning him that he was "equal to the Father as touching the Godhead," is inconceivable.

However terrified he might have been, if he had heard and seen what is written in the narrative, and if he had himself spoken the words which are attributed to him, how could he have forgotten everything, and have replied, "I know not *this man?*" The enemies of Jesus had not believed in his divine mission: Peter, on the contrary, had believed—what? He wept bitterly when he thought of his cowardice and weakness; he could hardly have forgotten in those bitter moments how Jesus had foretold this scene of the crucifixion and its surroundings; he must have remembered how, in his enthusiasm of feeling, he had said, "That be far from thee;" and the unusually stern words which followed, "Get thee behind me, Satan," must have rung in his ears as he pondered over all that had passed. But no! If they were ever spoken, these words left no remembrance behind, for after the repose and recollection of the Sabbath, when he is told of the resurrection, "it seemed to him as an idle tale, and he believed it not."

Let us recall what had passed in the course of Peter's companionship with Jesus, the miracles he had seen, his walking on the sea, and those other miracles he had himself performed—"Thou art Peter"—his professions of faith, the transfiguration, the discourses of Jesus; all the varied and wonderful statements and events which Peter had listened to and witnessed; these things, so written in the Gospels, are adduced as proofs of the divinity of Jesus. Peter must have been acquainted with all that we

now read, and all the many other things, which if they were written would fill the world; and yet at the conclusion of all, Jesus is only "this man." He is consigned to the tomb as were other men, and when there was a report of his resurrection Peter disbelieved it, and treated it as an idle tale. And it was not Peter only who so disbelieved; it was the eleven, and all the rest. Not one of them remembered the predictions of Jesus; nothing which they had seen or heard had impressed them with the belief that he was "equal to the Father as touching the Godhead." "A great stone was rolled to the door of the sepulchre, and they departed."

Between the crucifixion and the time when the Gospels were written much had happened of which very little authentic history remains. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles are all the contemporary documents which can be relied upon. The evidence that the Gospels were not written until very many years after the crucifixion is not at first apparent to everyone. The disputes amongst learned men as to the actual dates of these documents have not yet been disposed of. I—an uninstructed layman—can only compare one author with another, and calculate upon which side probability seems to preponderate. But there is evidence in the documents themselves, which is, so far as it goes, distinct and clear. No one can say with certainty that the Gospel which bears the name of Luke was written by the physician Luke. But the introduction to it, by whomsoever written, gives us some means of approximately determining its date. The first words of this Gospel are: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." From these words it is clear that many other such declarations existed, or, as Luke puts it, "had been taken in hand"—had been

committed to writing. Whether they were authentic declarations or no does not appear, and whether the three now contained in our Bibles were of the number does not appear. It is only said that at the time this was written many other persons had previously taken in hand the same work. The next words are: "Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses." It is not said that any of the "eye-witnesses" had set forth anything in writing. The writer then goes on to say: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of the things wherein thou hast been instructed." Theophilus was, therefore, a man at the time this Gospel was written, and he had been in his childhood instructed in the Christian religion. We must allow some considerable margin for such effects to have taken place as is implied in this statement. Putting these things together, therefore, it can hardly be reckoned less than thirty years after the crucifixion when this Gospel was written, and it may have been much more. In Dr. Burton's Greek Testament there are these notes on this chapter—First: "This seems to show that Luke himself was not an eye-witness;" and second: "That Theophilus was perhaps a man of some rank at Antioch." The words "most excellent" are not words implying anything respecting the personal character of Theophilus, for the Greek word which they represent is applied to Felix (Acts xxiii. 26) and to Festus (xxvi. 25); and is, therefore, a title, legal or complimentary, which, like our own right honourable, might or might not belong to a man to whom personally it was inapplicable. From the internal evidence it seems clear that this Gospel, by whomsoever written, was composed by a person who was

not an eye-witness of what he declares, and who took the work in hand at least twenty or thirty, or it may be fifty or sixty, years after the crucifixion. Therefore, from the birth of Christ, not less than fifty or sixty, or it may be one hundred, years.

It should be remembered that no proof can be produced of the actual date of the work; only inference and conjecture are available, beyond such intimations as are contained in the Gospel itself. It was addressed to a man of some rank; and he may have arrived at this position at an early period of his manhood. He had been "catechised" in Christianity; which implies organisation and consolidation amongst the people who professed this religion. A person, said to have been instructed in the tenets of John Wesley, would, probably, be a person born after the sect had been established and gained a footing. It is not likely that the writer of the Gospel would address himself to a child; or that the title, most excellent, would be applied to a mere youth. We have, therefore, some data which show the time and circumstances under which the Gospel was written.

I have said there is no proof that this Gospel was written by Luke; and when I say this, I refer to another part of the New Testament to show what I mean. In the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, iii. 17, St. Paul says, "The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is the token in every epistle; so I write." The word token means a "sign," a "seal," a test or proof of genuineness. Such was St. Paul's method of certifying his own work. To the Galatians he says (ch. vi. 6.): "See how large a letter I have written unto you, with my own hand;" or, rather, "see with what large letters." Here, again, he calls attention to the mark, or sign, by which his letter might be known. "The salutation by the hand of me Paul." (Colossians iv. 18.)

No one can contend that there is any such evidence as this respecting any one of the Gospels. The superscription is, "according to Matthew," &c.; but there is no token or mark to corroborate it. Again, there is a unity of style, a continuity of thought, which distinguishes a letter, as contrasted with a mere inartificial narrative. The one lends itself to interpolation and alteration much more readily than the other. And there may be no undoubted and unchallenged writings of the narrator with which a special narrative may be compared. It is an inference from more or less uncertain premises that the Gospel was written by Luke; and the writer did not care to put his authorship beyond doubt by affixing some token to his manuscript which should authenticate it.

If we transport ourselves, in thought, to the period we are considering, and make use of the incidental information which is left us, we shall probably think that the apostles were not able to write at all. Peter and John, the foremost of them, are described (Acts iv. 13) as "unlearned and ignorant men." And we can tell what this means. In modern days we may have heard a man speak in a court with some fluency, and perceive at the same time that he is "unlearned and ignorant" —has learned neither to read nor to write. Just so the Pharisees recognise the illiterateness of the apostles; and their position and employment render it improbable that they had acquired these arts.

There is some negative evidence, besides this of the Jewish Council, that the apostles were not writers. It is implied, if it is not asserted, in Luke's Gospel, that the persons who had taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of the things believed were those only who had received them from eye-witnesses. The eye-witnesses themselves are not said to have taken this work in hand.

It is impossible to overlook the fact that the writer of this Gospel makes no claim to supernatural knowledge. He asserts that he "had perfect understanding, from the very first, of all things which were delivered unto us by eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word." Whether the eye-witnesses and ministers were the same persons is not clear. It might well be, according to the phraseology, that the eye-witnesses were not the same persons. But at any rate, the writer only claims to have had perfect understanding, through communication with eye-witnesses, whether the value of his testimony is thereby lessened or not. He does not pretend to have been an eye-witness, and he challenges for his narrative no more than that it is a statement founded upon reports communicated to him by those who had seen. We are asked to take his statement not upon mere authority, but upon evidence. In the first chapter of the Acts, Peter proposes that some one who had companied with them from the beginning should be selected as a "witness" in the place of Judas. The necessity of proof and witnessing is recognised; it is acknowledged that evidence at first hand is more weighty than hearsay evidence; it was not enough, according to St. Peter, that some one should be able to say he had been told such or such a thing. A "witness" was wanted—a man who had heard and seen. The men and women of Nazareth were witnesses—had heard and seen certain things—and their testimony is totally at variance with that which proceeds from other persons, who only reported later traditions. Which evidence would a Court of Justice receive? What questions would it ask as to mysterious occurrences? Are they attested by persons who saw and heard—real witnesses—or are they vouched by those who only received them long after at second hand? In proportion to the uncommonness of an event

must be the strength of the evidence upon which it is received.

Whether the story of the Trojan war is a true history or not, is a question of great literary interest. Whether the Iliad was the work of one man or of several, is an enquiry upon which opinions may differ, and a little clear evidence might turn the scale one way or other. But if we are asked to believe all the stories of all the gods who are brought upon the scene, we find it impossible to do so. Without casting any reflection upon anyone, or without asking whether the author himself believed, we say that the things are intrinsically unbelievable, and we cannot be asked in any case to believe statements of this character without adequate evidence ; such evidence as shall neutralise and overcome the inherent improbability of the matter submitted to us. That Homer composed in the Greek language we have no doubt ; but that the Gospel of Matthew, or Mark, or Luke was originally written in Greek, and has never been added to or tampered with, may be more or less probable, but is not matter of proof.

In the interval between the crucifixion and the period when the Gospels were written, be that interval longer or shorter, a great change took place in the feelings, expectations, and belief of the apostles. We have seen that on the third day after the death of Jesus they regarded the report of his resurrection as an "idle tale." We have seen that not one of them ever spoke of his supernatural birth, or displayed any knowledge of the events which are said to have accompanied it. When they were asked what the people said of him, they replied that some said one thing and some another ; and when they were asked, "Whom say ye that I am ?" Peter replied, "The Christ of God." What he meant by these words it is impossible to say, for he gave unequivocal evidence afterwards of his

belief that Jesus had died as other men die, and that the report of his resurrection was an "idle tale." His verbal confession at one time, therefore, must be taken with his acts and sentiments at another. But here comes a critical point of the investigation. This confession of Peter was written by Luke long after the crucifixion, and long after much change had occurred in the apostle's feeling and faith. The Jewish nation had expected a Messiah—a Christ—and Jesus put to the apostles the question, "What think ye of Christ?" What are your feelings as to his person and office? We may be quite sure, from subsequent facts, that when this question was propounded they had no clear or definite view on the subject, and that the words which they made use of in reply conveyed no such idea as they conveyed when St. Luke wrote his Gospel.

Luke's account of the journey to Emmaus proves how imperfectly disciples of Jesus (believers) apprehended what was meant by the word Christ. Jesus addressed the two travellers as "fools and slow of heart to believe," and said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered?" plainly indicating that their ideas of Christ were thoroughly mistaken; so that the words, "Thou art the Christ of God," might be a form of expression which had in it no meaning that was near the truth. That it meant to them at the time, a person who was "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made," is inconceivable, and cannot be true; and if the word did not mean this, what did it mean? "The Apostles' creed," whilst Jesus sojourned with them on earth, was manifestly a wholly different thing from what it was when Luke wrote his Gospel. The historical language of Luke, that which discloses the state of the apostle's mind and belief at a given time, must be weighed and measured against that which comes in, by way of commentary after-

wards. If it be true that the apostles, at the time of his death, believed that Jesus was mortal as they were, and regarded his resurrection as an "idle tale," in what respect were they believers more than others? Reading the Gospels considerately, with a view to answer this question, what do we find? Again and again we are told that people did not believe in Jesus; that his brethren did not believe in him. Did not believe—what?

In what particulars can it be shown that, at the time of the happening of these events, the belief of the apostles differed from that of the rest? They say after his death, "We trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke xxiv. 21); and in the first chapter of the Acts (said to be written by Luke) they ask, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel?" So that it is evident, up to the last moment, they clung to the expectation of a temporal kingdom of some kind. When this Gospel of Luke, therefore, was written, the "Apostles' creed" had very materially varied from what it was, when the events happened which are described in the Gospel; and if we seek an answer from the apostles to the question, "What think ye of Christ?" we must ascertain from themselves what their state of mind was at the time, and distinguish between this and the comments made afterwards. There are in the narrative many expressions of wonder at the mighty works done by Jesus, and much surprise seems to have been felt at the unbelief which was manifested; but we are not told what it was that was disbelieved. If the people did not believe that Jesus was equal to the Father as touching the Godhead, neither, whilst he lived, did the apostles believe this. If the people believed that Jesus would die as other men, so did the apostles. If the people did not believe that Jesus would become a temporal king to deliver them

from the Roman yoke, they apparently showed in this respect a better judgment than the apostles. And it is beyond measure surprising, after what is represented by Luke to have been done and said throughout the life and ministry of Jesus, that at last the apostles should have no other belief respecting him than that which it is proved they entertained upon the third day after his crucifixion.

Any expressions, therefore, in the narrative which are inconsistent with the state of mind disclosed by previous facts must be modified. Very remarkable are the words addressed to the travellers on the road to Emmaus—"Fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken"—not fools and slow of heart to believe and understand words and wonders heard and seen. Yet how pale are the words spoken by any prophets compared with the words spoken by Jesus himself—"never man spake like this man." And yet what he had said did not produce the belief that he was a divine person, equal to the Father. These two disciples are reproached for their slowness of belief, because they had been unaffected by what the prophets had spoken; and yet they had probably seen Jesus raise the dead. The narrator says the world had come after him (John xii. 19); he had entered Jerusalem amid hosannas; miracles and wonders had been performed by him, and by others commissioned by him; and yet they are not reproached for their slowness of heart, in remaining uninfluenced by such manifestations of divine power as these, but because they did not apprehend ambiguous prophesies, couched in figurative and poetical language. It does seem strange that those two disciples should have seen and heard what Luke describes, and should have remained ignorant of Christ's mission and character, and should be blamed, not for this, but because they misunderstood obscure pro-

phesies, which they might have only heard in the synagogue, and, moreover, have understood as there expounded. How are we to explain the fact that these two men knew Jesus of Nazareth, knew that he "was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," and yet did not get beyond this belief? though much more than this is asserted in the narrative; they confess that the women "made them astonished" by the report that Jesus "was alive." How could they be "astonished," unless, indeed, they had adopted the taunt of the Jews—"He saved others, himself he cannot save?" How could they be unimpressed by a prophet, mighty in deed and word, and be expected to interpret truly obscure prophesies which might never have been expounded to them?

Surely if the Pharisees took precautions against the resurrection, or removal, of Jesus—remembering his words—the disciples must have had some comprehension of them, must have conversed about them, and could not be "astonished" when they heard that he was alive; and yet, so far as the narrative informs us, this was the state of mind of them all. Once more we ask, what up to the moment of his resurrection was the difference between the belief of the apostles respecting Jesus and the belief of those who were not his followers? It is easy to treat such a question with indifference and contempt; much easier than it is to give a satisfactory answer to it. John sent disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" and the answer is, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard." (Luke vii. 22.) These were to convince him, though he had not seen and heard; and yet "believers" who had both seen and heard "rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre and departed." "He called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils and to

cure diseases; and the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done." (Luke ix. 1.) Immediately after this, Luke tells us that Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom say the people that I am?" Peter replies, "The Christ of God." And he straightly charged them and commanded them to tell no man that thing: saying, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and rise again the third day."

"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spit on, and they shall scourge him, and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were spoken."

That twelve men could be found who did not understand what it was to be mocked, spitefully entreated, spitted on, scourged, and put to death, is incomprehensible; and even more unintelligible is it, that when within a short time all these things happened to him who uttered the warning, the twelve men, being his friends, should remember nothing of it, should not in any way be influenced by it, should embalm his dead body, roll a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and utterly disbelieve that he had risen from the dead. "There was a strife among them which of them should be accounted greatest." (Luke xxii. 24.) At that time, just prior to the crucifixion, if the apostles had been asked, "What think ye of Christ," how would they have answered? The evidence conclusively proves that to the very last they looked for a temporal kingdom, and that, in the supreme moment of their Master's fate, "there was a strife among them which should be greatest"—in that kingdom.

There have been manifold and bitter contentions, cruel and ruthless persecutions have been perpetrated, because men differed as to the answer which should be given to the question, "What think ye of Christ?" We appeal to the twelve men who saw and heard much more than we can ever be acquainted with; we put aside remarks and commentaries made many years after; and we ask, whilst Jesus lived amongst them, what was their belief respecting him? What matters it that men a hundred years afterwards asserted one thing or another? What does it matter that three hundred years later Bishops met in Council at Nicea, under the presidency of such an one as Constantine, and solemnly affirmed after what manner Jesus was born? What is the evidence of contemporary inhabitants of Nazareth? And which evidence is the best? What is to be known upon the subject is contained in a book, and is matter of fact dependent on testimony of witnesses. One of the men who wrote a declaration of the things most surely believed respecting the birth and death of Jesus—which is the foundation of all the superstructure of Christian creeds—tells us that "things" were delivered unto him by persons who were eye-witnesses. This is the whole authority which he claims on behalf of what he writes; and no number of men coming after him can reverse real facts or create new evidence. Facts concerning the birth and parentage of a man are to be ascertained by investigations, and admissions, and concurrence of opinion made in the place, and among the people where he was brought up. What can be proved of a man's origin by the people who knew his history and surroundings from his youth, are reckoned to be facts which no mere rumours and representations made long after can invalidate or disprove. They are evidences of a higher quality, and they command the assent of all men who know the value of evidence.

Alexander the Great might tell the Persians that he was the son of Jupiter, and those ignorant people might believe it; and if they had written his history, they might have asserted, and the people in Persia who read the history might have believed it; but the Greeks, who had known Alexander from his youth, were not likely to believe it; and the assertions of men who had no means of knowing facts are as nothing when weighed against the evidence of others who had means and opportunities of becoming acquainted with them.

The case then stands thus: We have a narrative compiled by writers who were not eye-witnesses of what they relate—for there is no evidence that any one of the writers knew Jesus of Nazareth until he was over thirty years of age. They knew nothing, therefore, of his birth and childhood. St. Luke expressly limits his own knowledge to "things" "delivered unto" him by "eye-witnesses." He asserts that he had "perfect understanding," derived from others who had evidence as "eye-witnesses," of things which he records. When, therefore, we come upon events of which we are quite certain these persons were not "eye-witnesses," the test fails, and we are left without the evidence which the writer admits to be needful. There is no claim by St. Luke to supernatural knowledge. What he knew came to him, as he declares, through ordinary channels of information, and came to him very long after the occurrences which he describes. He provides us himself with a canon to test the narrative which he has compiled. He was told certain things, and he believed them. He does not allege that he had supernatural guidance. He affirms that he was told by an eye-witness what had happened. He admits that he has no higher or more authoritative testimony than this, and where this fails the narrative must stand or fall by its own

inherent and internal consistency and probability and coherence.

There are imbedded in the narrative certain statements which (if true) must have been known to the people amongst whom Jesus of Nazareth was born and brought up. But, according to the narrative itself, not one of these statements is made, or alluded to, by any of the persons who were acquainted with Jesus of Nazareth during his childhood, youth, or manhood. A statement of his miraculous birth is found in the narrative, but it is clear that this is a statement lying outside the testimony of "the eye-witnesses" to whom St. Luke was indebted for his information. We turn, therefore, to his own narrative, and to the narrative of those who, like himself, had taken in hand, to set forth in order, a declaration of things believed amongst them; and it then appears that, instead of there being any knowledge of a supernatural birth in the place where the mother of Jesus lived, amongst her own people, every particle of evidence which the narrative contains proves that, then and there, Jesus was regarded by everyone as the son of Joseph and Mary. It is proved that his mother, in the most natural and unaffected manner, publicly acknowledged Joseph as his father. Moreover, that he was so announced to his disciples; that he lived thirty years in and about Nazareth as the son of Joseph; that he left the place for a short time, and on his return was greeted by everyone as the son of Joseph and Mary.

The narrative is clear, and precise, and natural in all that relates to the parentage and family of Jesus; and the writer—be he who he may—puts the matter beyond controversy by an incidental and casual admission, which is of more value than any tradition or superstitions of a later day. He says, "Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the

son of Joseph." (Luke iii. 23.) He was supposed to be the son of Joseph just as other individuals are supposed to be the children of those married persons under whose shelter and protection they are born and nurtured; who never repudiate the parentage, but acknowledge it and discharge its duties; living in the midst of their own people who know all their circumstances. The evidence of such facts is not to be invalidated by subsequent statements, the authenticity of which cannot be verified. The testimony of Luke is unimpeachable. He tells us that during at least thirty years of his life Jesus was regarded as the son of Joseph. How could such an impression arise, and how can it be refuted?

The evidence of St. Matthew, who did not know Jesus until after his thirtieth year, corroborates this conclusion, for, in a genealogical statement, he says—"Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (Matt. i. 16.) If the writer of these words meant to deny the paternity of Joseph he adopted a mode of expression certain to be misunderstood. If, on the other hand, he meant that the husband of Mary was the father of her son Jesus, who is called Christ, then he expressed the fact in a perfectly simple and natural manner.

We know from the narratives how Jesus of Nazareth was regarded during his lifetime by those who had the best means of knowing him; we have the admission of his mother, we have the assertion of his neighbours, and we have the clear statements of his biographers that he was, without any exception, thought (ἐνομίζετο) to be the son of Joseph. No hint whatever is given of anyone having suggested anything to the contrary. How unaccountable upon any other supposition is the remark of Mary when she had reproved him for absenting himself —"Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." To

which he replies—"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? *And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.*" What!—not understand this simple remark of a child who had been ushered into the world in the mysterious manner known to Mary—if known? Is it conceivable that a woman who had discoursed with an angel, as Mary is represented to have done, should not understand words like these?

Let us look back once more to the reported interview between the angel and Mary; let us remember what is related of Joseph; and then ask ourselves whether it is possible they should not understand so simple an expression as that which Jesus had uttered? Again, let us ask, whether it is possible that the disciples and apostles of Jesus could have been acquainted with the miraculous birth, and the many wonders connected with it, and yet when Jesus is crucified that a great stone should be rolled to the door of the sepulchre; and that when his resurrection is announced they should not only disbelieve it, but treat it as an "idle tale?" If the resurrection was to them but an idle tale, how could they ever have known of the miraculous birth? The resurrection was surely a matter easy of belief to persons who knew of the miraculous birth. Plainly the apostles at the time of the crucifixion did not know of the miraculous birth and of all that has since been connected with it.

That these narratives should be tested by the ordinary rules of evidence, and not accepted as supernatural, is plain from admissions made by the writers themselves. Not only does Luke appeal for his facts to eye-witnesses, but Peter says, after the death of Judas, that some person must be appointed in his stead "to be a witness;" and it must, he asserts, "be some person who

has companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, *beginning from the baptism of John.*" (Acts i. 22.) Mark this limitation of time. Antecedent to the baptism of John there is thus no testimony of witnesses. For a "witness" is a person who has seen and heard that which is asserted; having, by actual auditory and visual means, become acquainted with facts. In the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts, Paul says, that on his journey to Damascus, the "voice" which he heard announced that he was to be "a witness" of the things which he had then seen, and of those which might hereafter appear. This is the common test by which men govern their affairs. The transactions of life are constantly brought to this standard. "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled" (1 John i. 1), settles and determines every disputable point which arises in the business of life. "This thing," says St. Paul, "was not done in a corner." (Acts xxvi. 26.) Implying that facts are worthy of belief in proportion to the light and publicity under which they have been performed, and that when they are "done in a corner" they may, if obscure and improbable, fairly and justly be doubted. The common sense of mankind acknowledges the rectitude of this rule; recognises that the parentage of children cannot be impeached, except by witnesses and evidence sufficient to overturn all natural presumption, and all the proceedings which mark and discriminate the conduct of real parents and of the persons amongst whom they have lived. The history and conduct of two persons, and of their neighbours, is the foundation of that law and practice which determines the parentage of children. These are the "witnesses" whose evidence is not to be gainsaid.

There is so much of reverential and devotional feeling

connected with the history we have been considering that very many persons would rather not look into it, if, as the result of doing so, they are likely to find it not authentic. They are content, without enquiry, to believe what they have been taught. There is something to be said for such a feeling, but though it is justified by some sort of reasoning, it is essentially immoral. The belief of all mankind is not proof against evidence which contradicts it. All mankind believed that the sun moved, and that the earth was a plane surface and did not move. This belief is proved to have been wrong.

At the time of the Reformation it must have been hard and painful to reject cherished beliefs which had been received as essential to salvation. But men did this. They were a small minority, and they fell under the bitter malediction of those from whom they separated themselves; but as time went on, and their numbers increased, they gained courage and confidence, and the fear and the faint-heartedness passed away; and the beliefs persecuted at the Reformation have now got a firm hold upon the mind, and the denunciations of the olden time are disregarded. All beliefs are founded upon some sort of reasons. Persons who are ever ready to revile rationalism are themselves rationalists to a limited extent. If their beliefs are assailed they have something to say for them. If they are Romanists, they hold certain dogmas because for some reason they believe their priests. If, on the other hand, they are Protestants, they hold a special creed because they think it is true. They have all and each exercised their faculties and feelings more or less, and well or ill, in the matter of their creed. The man who "worships ignorantly," worships in some sort nevertheless, and is mostly unconscious of his ignorance; but he is not the less certain that he is right. Protestants—the descendants of those who parted

company with their co-religionists at the Reformation—should remember the obloquy which was then heaped upon their predecessors. The persecutors of the Reformation had more justification than the petty persecutors of the present time—the Protestants who, having reasoned themselves out of Romanism, would arrest the progress of reason, or revile with bitter words those who are forced by an irresistible conviction to carry further the principles upon which the Reformation was founded. At the Reformation a man rejected the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and because he did so, he was threatened with eternal damnation. He persevered notwithstanding, because he could not believe what seemed to him contradictory and absurd. The very faculty of believing is violated and outraged by the admission of what is regarded as an absurdity.

"How can they believe," asks St. Paul, "in him of whom they have not heard?" There are conditions of believing quite as unmanageable and impracticable as that which St. Paul proposes. He implies that in certain cases belief is not possible—the materials out of which it is to be shaped do not exist. But if the materials offered to us refuse to coalesce, if they are utterly refractory and cannot be combined, then St. Paul's question is strictly applicable—"How can they believe?" The man who proposes the belief is but a man, subject to like passions with other men. Multiply him by three hundred, or by any number of hundreds, call him and his colleagues what you will, you have not lifted him or them out of that slough of despond, that bog of doubt and difficulty, in which human nature finds itself. They cannot alter the nature of facts, and they cannot alter the nature of that evidence which is needed for the proof of facts.

Not many years ago an Œcumenical Council decreed

that the mother of Jesus was not conceived in sin, as others are said to be, but was of immaculate conception. This may be believed, so long as the positive assertions of men, ignorant of a fact, pass for proof. Councils may asseverate; they cannot make that to be a fact which is not so, nor annihilate a fact which exists. Dr. S. R. Maitland* says:—"Let it be remembered, to reflecting readers such remarks may seem trite and commonplace; but for the sake of others I do not like to omit the suggestion—that whatsoever God has allowed to exist, or to be done, is an eternal fact—that it has become part of everlasting and immutable truth—that nothing subsequent can alter it."

The facts recorded in the New Testament—miraculous or otherwise—must be known and authenticated as other facts, before they can properly be believed. To say that a man believes them, who has only received them inertly and unintelligently, is a solecism; and no number of men so receiving them add one iota to their validity; no generations of men do it, and no Councils can establish as a fact that which is not so. They may collect evidence and weigh it, they cannot dispense with it; they may conclude for their own time, but not for all time; and no dogmas respecting matters of fact which are based upon fables can ultimately prevail. They may be propagated by fire and sword; they may triumph by the agency of dungeons and darkness; but the time will come when force and brutality will fail, and when the questions must be reopened and sifted, which have been shut up and sealed by arbitrary power.

From the time of Theodosius the Great, through very many centuries, no man could safely dispute the orthodox creed. He could not do it even in very recent times.

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* Eight Essays.

He cannot do it comfortably even now. Ecclesiastics of the highest rank, who are themselves charged with heresy, are still ready to apply opprobrious epithets to those whose conscience will not allow them to embrace the popular creeds. Those conscientious persons may be wrong. They are obviously in hosts of cases honest and sincere, and they are admitted to be not less useful members of society than those who revile them. They possess no pecuniary endowments to bias their judgment; they desire to live soberly, righteously, and godly; but they cannot believe that which revolts and confounds their understanding. It is not pride of intellect which influences them. Humbly and reverently they acknowledge the narrowness of their powers, and they feel that these are utterly inadequate to draw the vast conclusions which the orthodox pronounce with so much facility and boldness. Of things visible and palpable men have arduously and slowly made conquest; of the things invisible and supernatural they have easily (as it seems) obtained the mastery. When they were profoundly ignorant of the solar system, they were apparently quite familiar with the ways and counsels, and nature, and substance of Him who was before all things, and by whom all things consist. (Col. i. 17.) On the very threshold of their polity they are confronted with the question—"Canst thou by searching find out God?" and yet when a man doubted or denied some marvellous proposition which they had excogitated respecting this great Being, they racked him, or burned him, or let loose upon an unoffending people, who had no metaphysics, a blood-thirsty and ruthless soldiery. Because a man could not believe what appeared to be absurd and was honest enough to say so, he was deprived of the common rights of humanity; and only after hard, bitter, and protracted struggles has this catholic and unrelenting spirit been partially subdued and cast out.

Who were the parents of some particular person, is a matter of fact, to be ascertained by rules of evidence which have grown up under the teaching of experience. Society has worked out for itself, upon this question, methods of proof which are clear and simple, and which cannot be set aside by unverifiable traditions and dogmatism. That a man lived from infancy to manhood with persons of unblemished character, calling themselves his parents, that his neighbours and friends knew him as their child, and that every person with whom he came into contact so regarded him, is a chain of circumstances final and conclusive; and which, if it could be impeached by mere reports circulated many years afterwards, by persons having no real knowledge of these events, would shake and disturb the very foundations of society.

Proof is of different kinds and clearness, and men have to be satisfied with less in one case than in another. Individuals are convicted of crimes upon what is called circumstantial evidence; and lives are forfeited and property is alienated, and the affairs of the world are transacted with satisfaction, and of necessity, upon evidence of this description. The legitimacy of a person is proved by those circumstances which are the staple—the warp and weft—of every-day life. The habits of people, and how they live together; what is the common opinion and belief respecting them, founded upon observation and knowledge extending over many years—these are facts convincing and decisive. The quibbles and refinements of captious objectors have no weight in practical affairs. That persons are born in the natural course of generation is taken for granted, unless some overwhelming proof of the contrary is produced; and when all the actual circumstances known to us, or known to anyone, are upon the side of what is customary and common, then the unnatural and the abnormal lose all credibility.

The "judicious Hooker" furnishes a canon on this subject which may most appropriately close this discussion. He says:—"Now, it is not required, nor can it be exacted at our hands, that we should yield unto anything other assent than such as doth answer the evidence which is to be had of that we assent unto. . . . . The truth is, that how bold and confident soever we may be in words, when it cometh to the point of trial, such as the evidence is, which the truth hath either in itself or through proof, such is the heart's assent thereunto; neither can it be stronger, being grounded as it should be."*

* "Ecclesiastical Polity," Book II., ch. vii., 5.

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AMPHILOGIA,

OR

CORRESPONDENCE

ON

THE TEACHING OF JESUS,

BETWEEN

The Right Reverend,

THE LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF,

alfred Olivant

AND

EVAN POWELL MEREDITH, F.A.S.L.

Author of "The Prophet of Nazareth," &c.

ALSO

CORRESPONDENCE,

TOUCHING

THE DIVINE ORIGIN

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION,

BETWEEN THE

REV. JOHN FAIRFAX FRANCKLIN, M.A.

Vicar of Whaplode, Spalding,

AND

EVAN POWELL MEREDITH, F.A.S.L.

SECOND EDITION.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The object of publishing the following Correspondence with two of the dignitaries of the Episcopal Church of England—a Church which considers itself alone to teach true Christianity, which brands all other Churches as heretical, and which, owing to the national belief in the perfect truthfulness of its doctrines, is supported by the law of the land, being part and parcel of the English Constitution—is to give the Christian laity an opportunity of judging how their ablest, and most learned religious guides deal with objections fairly and courteously raised against the Divine origin of their religion.

The reader of the following letters will see that a Bishop, when the truth of his Faith, and even of his own proclaimed doctrine, are questioned, utterly declines to offer any proof in their support; and that a renowned Vicar, sent out by the Church to preach Christianity, with a diploma of his deep learning, comes forward, full of fanatic fire, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against" a writer who had ventured to criticise the credentials of the Christian Faith, but breaks down before he is enabled to refute a single objection advanced against his Creed, or to adduce one argument or fact in proof of its supernatural origin. Of the Bishop's manner of dealing with objections raised to the dogmas of his religion, an idea may be obtained from the following extracts, taken from a leading article in the PATRIOT of September 20th, 1866,—one of the many Papers which have noticed the Correspondence, and one of the ablest and most talented orthodox, or Christian Papers of the day:—

"A very curious correspondence between the Bishop of LLANDAFF and Mr. EVAN POWELL MEREDITH, of Monmouth, has just been printed, which is likely to be useful in more ways than one. The Bishop, on the 27th of last July, preached a sermon at Monmouth, from the words of the Book of Ecclesiastes, 'Money is a defence,' in which he took occasion to maintain the usefulness of riches when rightly applied, and enumerated some of the evils which poverty engenders. One of his hearers was the aforesaid Mr. POWELL MEREDITH, who seems to have devoted himself to theological studies, with a result wholly adverse to the supernatural claims of Christianity. This gentleman, therefore, thought it his duty to question the Bishop of LLANDAFF as to the conformity of his recent discourse with the teaching of the Gospel; reminding him that the Evangelists represent their Master as always extolling, not wealth, but poverty, pronouncing blessings on the poor, and requiring His disciples to sell that which they had, in order that, by 'giving alms,' they might have treasure in heaven.

"Mr. MEREDITH puts his case with considerable force, and urgently requests of the Bishop to explain to him how it was possible to reconcile such teaching with the principles of his sermon, which distinctly advocated the utility of capital. At first, the Bishop fenced in his reply, stating that he had been misrepresented, and that he had not inculcated the pursuit of wealth. Mr. MEREDITH, however, was able to produce a short-hand report of the sermon, from which it appeared that the Bishop had really attributed many beneficial consequences to the possession of property, and not without considerable reason for his faith, since it is plain that, if almsgiving be so great a virtue that must be valuable to possess, which it is so desirable for the poor to receive in the

way of donation; and the Bishop had used the words, 'Poverty is a source of unbounded evil. His questioner, therefore, plied him again with the Gospel texts in support of voluntary poverty, and persisted in asking for an explanation. The Bishop now took his stand on higher ground. He said he was the Bishop, and had no time for correspondence with individual gentlemen on theological matters perplexing to their minds. If Mr. MEREDITH was puzzled to reconcile the doctrine in Ecclesiastes with the doctrine of the Evangelists, let him consult some of the working clergy at Monmouth, who were perfectly competent to afford to him every satisfaction. If he sincerely desired to avoid danger to his soul, he could not err in a literal obedience to the Gospel texts; and if he sold all that he had and gave it to the poor, it would scarcely be imputed to him as an offence worthy of condemnation. This did not satisfy Mr. MEREDITH at all; he thought very little of his parish clergymen, and he returns to the charge with still larger citation of texts in favour of poverty, and shows the Bishop that the world could not go on if every one literally obeyed these exhortations of the Gospel. He now further avows himself a disbeliever in the Divine authority of CHRIST, and explains why he had not avowed this at first; because, 'had I done so, your Lordship, in accordance with the usual practice of the Anglican clergy, would not have deigned to furnish me with a reply,—would have retreated into a fortress of unapproachable taciturnity, deeming it beneath your dignity fairly and fearlessly to meet the arguments of a Deist.' And this letter ends with a bitter complaint of the general refusal of the clergy, to answer the arguments of sceptics. Immediately, however, that the Bishop of LLANDAFF found out that his correspondent was an unbeliever, he seems to have made up his mind to listen to him no longer. The issue, therefore, is the publication of a series of pretentious but vigorously-written letters, in which Christianity is made to appear as a piece of impracticable folly, and its ministers as men who dare not undertake its defence. We should be very glad to know what business there was in the diocese of Llandaff of greater importance than setting an example to the clergy of that neighbourhood of a successful answer to an able and courteous but rather unscrupulous sceptic, whose case was at least strong enough on the surface to deserve consideration. Mr. MEREDITH had written with decorum, and with an appearance of argument which deserved better treatment. . . . . There is but too much truth in the complaint that the objections of honest doubters, can obtain few answers from the clergy. . . . . Considering the vast numbers who are devoted to the work of public instruction, it is not surely expecting too much to require that in every populous neighbourhood there should be at least one or two learned and able Christians competent to encounter the objections of infidelity, and with good temper and brotherly patience to meet the sincerely-felt difficulties of doubting inquirers. And how could bishops better serve the cause of revelation than by finding time to explain why it was that CHRIST laid so much stress upon the poverty of the first ministers and missionaries of the Gospel, and so particularly warned them against rabbinical titles and lordly aspirations? The too common plan of flouting all 'infidel' opposition may seem to bear a show of wisdom in 'not answering a fool according to his folly;' but not all sceptics are 'fools.' There is abroad a widely-spread spirit of doubt which requires better satisfaction than comes with the affirmation that the most learned ministers are too busy to deal with it."

As to the Vicar, his letters are deemed amply sufficient to exemplify his spirit, his skill, his knowledge and his reasoning power. Probably, his Christian brethren will console themselves by regarding him as one of those ministers who, the editor of the PATRIOT, in the article just cited, says, "are qualified to recommend Christianity by their lives, and by a simple announcement of its beneficent message, but who are not qualified by temper or by knowledge to undertake the confutation of honest gainsayers."

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN THE RIGHT REVEREND,

THE LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF,

AND

EVAN POWELL MEREDITH, F. A. S. L.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
August 13th, 1865.

MY LORD BISHOP,

On Thursday, the 27th ult., I had the privilege to be one of your Lordship's audience, at the consecration of the New Chapel in connection with the Free Grammar School at Monmouth, when your Lordship preached a sermon from Eccles. vii. 12; in which passage it is stated,—"money is a defence." Your Lordship will pardon me if I say that, in listening to your learned discourse on this part of your text, I could not help noticing a striking difference between the doctrine which you propounded and that which pervades the whole of the four Gospels, as having been set forth by Jesus, the founder of the Christian Faith.

Truly, it may be urged that both the occasion on which your Lordship preached and the text you chose, justified the manner in which you treated the latter, the immediate words before which go still further than your Lordship went, and imply that even wisdom is good only with wealth —נחלה, *an inheritance, estate, territory,*—a word quite equivalent, in ancient times, to the term,—כסף, *silver,* in your text.

But however that may be, the whole scope of your teaching and that of Christ appeared to me as irreconcilable as possibly they could be. Your Lordship told us that it was good to accumulate riches, and to make such good use of them as the Founder of the Monmouth Free Grammar School had made. You dwelt on the wretched state of the poor, attributing it to the want of riches. You enumerated some of the evils which poverty engenders. In short, you spoke in the highest terms of exertions to amass wealth, and pronounced poverty a curse.

Now, all this is diametrically opposed to the doctrine taught by Jesus, on this point, as reported in the Gospels, by four of his biographers, who make him to have said, "Blessed be ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. But woe unto you that are rich; for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger." Precisely the same doctrine he teaches in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. To his disciples he says—"Sell that ye have and give alms,"—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." In like manner when a rich young man asked him what he should do to secure eternal life, Jesus told him that, if he wished to arrive at the acme of moral perfection, he must sell all that he possessed, and give the proceeds to the poor. When the young man had gone away sorrowful, Jesus told his disciples that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, and that it was profitable for a person to forsake, not only houses and lands, but even the nearest and dearest kinsfolk, for the sake of his kingdom. (Matth. xix. 16. Mark x. 17. Luke xviii. 18.) To me, the whole drift of Jesus's teaching appears to imply that, of necessity, wealth is a curse, and poverty a blessing,—that the former is a sign of ungodliness, and the latter a mark of piety; and also that he intended the duty of being poor, as a perpetual obligation, to extend to all Christians of every age and clime. Both the manner in which he always inculcated this duty, in connection with precepts which, evidently, he intended to be perpetual, and the practice of the primitive Christians, prove indisputably that he would have all his followers to part with the whole of their wealth, so as to become the *blessed* poor entitled to the kingdom of heaven.

His Sermon on the mount is replete with this doctrine. Here, he repeatedly enunciates the precept—"Take therefore no thought for the morrow"—"Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on." Should your Lordship say or think, with others, that the words—"Take *no* thought," in the original, mean—"Take no *anxious* thought—do not lavish inordinate care on the things of this world," and so on, the answer is, that the Greek words employed here—*μη ουν μεριμνησητε*—as your Lordship well knows, simply mean—Take *no thought*, or *care—be not careful*. There is nothing whatever in the expression which justifies the idea of "*anxious* thought." The verb—*μεριμναω*, employed here, means merely *to care, to be careful, to heed*, and is most frequently, in the English version of the New Testament, translated *care*, and that in such connections as utterly exclude the idea of any particular *anxiety*, such as is sought to be attached to the word in the precept under notice. The same Greek word is rendered—*care* and *to care*, in 1 Cor. vii. 32—34; xii. 15. Phil. ii. 20; iv. 6, and 1 Pet. v. 7. In neither of these places is the idea of *anxiety* any more implied than ordinarily in the word, *care*. When Paul tells the Philippians to "be careful for nothing," he clearly means that they should not concern themselves about earthly things. When Jesus says—"Labour not for the meat which perisheth," (John vi. 27.) he means more than to "take no *anxious* thought for your life what ye shall eat." On this point he has left no just ground of doubt; for he has amply illustrated his precept by

reference to *birds* and *lilies*. Immediately after proclaiming the precept of taking no thought of life, he adds,—"Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them,"—"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Jesus here fully explains what he means by *taking no thought of life*. Just as the fowls of the air do nothing towards providing for their future subsistence, and as the lilies do nothing towards preparing their beautiful vesture, so Christians should do nothing towards providing food and raiment,—should take no thought whatever of the things of this life. This, unquestionably, is the doctrine taught by the Founder of the Christian religion, not only in this precept, but in a vast number of other places in the Gospels. But your Lordship will admit that this heavenly doctrine is at perfect variance with the sermon already mentioned. It is true that in that sermon, you made one attempt to harmonise the doctrine of the propriety of accumulating wealth with the teaching of the New Testament, by citing Jesus's injunction to "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." (Luke xvii. 9.) But permit me to say that this illustration was a most unhappy one. For, if your Lordship's view of this passage is correct, it implies that Jesus commends the unjust steward, saying that he had "done wisely" in cheating his master, and urges Christians, in the same manner, to make "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." Other divines feel great difficulty in dealing with this passage; but your Lordship appears to entertain no doubt as to its real meaning. If, however, it were admitted that Jesus in this passage taught that Christians should amass wealth, the concession would imply that his doctrine here is at variance with the whole of his teaching on all other occasions. When he sent his apostles to preach, he told them to take with them neither gold nor silver.—But I must desist.

My apology for thus troubling your Lordship is, that I humbly think I have, at least, a moral claim upon the bishop of the Diocese in which I live to set me right on theological matters, concerning which my error may be of spiritual consequence; and that especially when my perplexity has been caused by your Lordship's sermon.

If any of your clergy had preached a doctrine I could not harmonise with any portion of the Gospels, I should, in these days of all sorts of heresy, attribute it to their deficient knowledge of Gospel truth; but to your Lordship this cannot apply

Trusting that your Lordship will condescend to set me right on the foregoing subject,

I have the honour to be, my Lord Bishop,
Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant,
EVAN POWELL MEREDITH.

To the Right Reverend,
The Lord Bishop of Llandaff.

Bishop's Court, Llandaff,
August 16th, 1865.

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the favour of your letter, in which you inform me that you noticed a striking difference between the doctrine propounded in my sermon, on Eccles. vii. 12, and that which pervades the whole of the four Gospels. As you had formed this opinion, it was an act of kindness on your part to let me know that such was the case; for it gives me an opportunity of saying that you appear entirely to have mistaken what I said. You are, certainly, quite under a misapprehension in saying that I "told you that it was good to accumulate riches;" that I attributed "the wretched condition of the poor to the want of riches;" that "I spoke in the highest terms of exertions to amass wealth, and pronounced poverty a curse." That my memory might not deceive me, I looked last night over the portion of my sermon which relates to money, and could find nothing whatever from which such conclusions could be drawn.

With respect to your own expressed opinions upon money and poverty, and your interpretation of passages of Scripture in support of them, you must pardon me for not entering upon them. My incessant occupations would not allow of my commencing a correspondence which might possibly be a protracted one. And it is needless that I should do so. But I am glad to have had the opportunity of disavowing the sentiments which you have ascribed to myself.

I am, Sir, your faithful Servant,
A. LLANDAFF.

Evan Powell Meredith, Esq.
Agincourt Square, Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
August 19th, 1865.

MY LORD BISHOP,

Permit me to thank your Lordship for your letter of the 16th inst. wherein you say that I appear entirely to have mistaken what you advanced in your late sermon, at Monmouth, and add—"you are certainly quite under a misapprehension in saying that I 'told you that it was good to accumulate riches,' that I attributed 'the wretched condition of the poor to the want of riches,' that, I spoke in the highest terms of exertions to amass wealth, and pronounced poverty a curse."

Your Lordship will pardon me for saying that, in citing the foregoing passage from my letter, you have slighty modified my expressions.—My words were these:—"Your Lordship told us that it was good to accumulate riches, *and make such good use of them as the founder of the Monmouth Free Grammar School had made.* You dwelt on the wretched state of the poor, attributing it to the want of riches. You enumerated some of the evils which poverty engenders. In short, you spoke in the highest terms of exertions to amass wealth, and pronounced poverty a curse." These, *verbatim et literatim*, were the words I used. But your Lordship writes

that, after looking "over the portion of your sermon which relates to money, you could find nothing whatever from which such conclusions could be drawn," meaning the conclusions I had drawn in the passage just quoted from my former letter; and therefore you infer that *I have entirely mistaken what you said.* I acknowledge that it is possible for me to have mistaken the whole drift of your discourse; but I submit that it is not very probable that I did so in this instance; for, in common with three or four other persons present, I took down the whole of your Lordship's sermon as you delivered it; and I have since found my notes, in the main, corresponding with those of, at least, one of the gentlemen present, who, in short-hand, wrote down your discourse.

I shall now take the liberty of submitting to your Lordship a portion of the beginning of the sermon, as taken down at the time, not by me, but by a short-hand reporter; after reading which, and comparing it with your MS. your Lordship, I think, will not see any reason to say that your discourse is very grossly misrepresented.

"Eccles. vii. 12.—'For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.' In these words, the wise man contrasts both of the objects which are naturally esteemed by mankind to be worthy of possession; and he shows how the one is surpassed by the other. But while he does not fail in drawing a just comparison, he takes no pains to detract or lower the one, in order to increase the higher attributes of the other. He has not put it that riches cannot satisfy all our longings, that they cannot satisfy the immortal soul; he draws no alarming picture of riches, *as our Lord did when on earth*; but, giving due credit to the possession of money, and the craving of human nature for it, he strikes a balance, and points out one special property which money cannot purchase,—'But the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.' If we consider the advantages of the age in which we live, we cannot but see that wealth is more sought after than ever. There is no country in which there is so much craving after riches as there is in our own. Men who have secured a competency, upon which they can, with their wives and families, retire from the turmoil and troubles of commerce, instead of doing so, enter afresh on reckless and hazardous speculations, in order to achieve greater riches, and that no one shall pass them in the race. Now, it cannot be said that all this energy is expended on that which is worth nothing whatever: *for wealth contributes to the comforts and adornments of life. If there were nothing of value in wealth we should not have it so often quoted as comparisons in spiritual matters; and a higher authority even than the wise man in the text, would not have said, 'make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.' Poverty is a source of unbounded evil, with which many of the cottages of this country are afflicted, but which wealth can remove. How often has money relieved a poor man out of his troubles and distresses, and made a miserable home a happy one!* As to sickness, it is true that riches cannot absolutely keep it from us, but much may be done by the possessors of competent means, to ward off sickness, and to restore them again to health when afflicted, while the poor man, on the contrary, is exposed to the ravages of disease, and labours under great

disadvantages from his inability to afford means for procuring the necessary preventives, and restoratives, and comforts, which the rich man possesses."

Such is the tenour of your Lordship's discourse on the first head. But I must desist at present from citing any more. I could add that your Lordship used expressions quite as strong, if not stronger, in showing that, nationally considered, "money is a defence."

Now the question is, whether I am justified in saying,—1st "that your Lordship told us, "it was good to accumulate riches," if we made good use of them,—2ndly "that you dwelt on the wretched state of the poor, attributing it to the want of riches,"—3rdly that "you enumerated some of the evils which poverty engenders,"—4thly that you spoke in the highest terms of exertions to amass wealth; and—5thly that you pronounced poverty a curse. These five predicates, I submit to your Lordship, are fairly deducible from the whole drift of the extracts just cited from the report of your sermon. Let me beg to illustrate this a little further.

1. After describing the eagerness of people to acquire riches, you say—"Now it cannot be said that all this energy is expended on that which is worth nothing whatever; for wealth contributes to the comforts and adornments of life. If there was nothing of value in wealth, we should not have it so often quoted as comparisons in spiritual matters." &c. *Ergo*, the accumulation of wealth is good, or the "comforts and adornments of life" are not good, &c.

2. You say that the cottages of this country are afflicted with the evils of poverty, and that, differently from the rich, the poor man is exposed to the ravages of sickness, from want of wealth. Is this not to attribute the wretched state of the poor to the want of riches?

3. You describe the "great disadvantages" under which the poor man labours, "from his inability to afford means for providing the necessary preventives, and restoratives, and comforts," in sickness.

4. You exclaim, "How often has money relieved a poor man from troubles and distresses, and made a miserable home a happy one!" And you teach that, in case of persons afflicted with illness, "much may be done by the possessors of competent means to ward off sickness, and restore them again to health." If this is not to "speak in the highest terms of exertions to amass wealth," I am unable to imagine what can be so.

5. You say—"Poverty is a source of unbounded evil." Is this, I deferentially ask, not equal to "pronouncing poverty a curse?" or is it not even stronger language? It is true that, when I wrote my first letter to your Lordship, I had not my notes directly before me, so as to quote your expressions, word for word, as I have now just done; but I think that the foregoing proofs show that in no particular did I deviate from the meaning of that part of the discourse with which I dealt.

The matter standing thus, I must repeat to your Lordship that there appears to be a direct contradiction between your doctrine and that of Jesus, in reference to riches. You say—"Poverty is a source of unbounded evil;" but Jesus says "Blessed are ye poor,—Blessed are ye that hunger." You exclaim—"How often has money relieved a poor man from his troubles and distresses, and made a miserable home a happy one!" but Jesus exclaims—"Woe unto you that are rich,"—"Woe unto you that are full." You say that all the energy expended in the accumulation of wealth cannot be said to be worth nothing,—you declare wealth

valuable, and would have us provide competent means to ward off sickness; but Jesus enjoins us to take "no thought for the morrow," and to "lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," exhorting us to relinquish the possession of houses and lands, together with all other species of wealth. Which of these two conflicting doctrines, would your Lordship advise me to believe?—that which was preached by Dr. Oliphant, or that inculcated by Jesus?

Your lordship writes thus:—"With respect to your own expressed opinions upon money and poverty, and your interpretation of passages of Scripture in support of them, you must pardon me for not entering upon them. My incessant occupations would not allow of my commencing a correspondence which might possibly be a protracted one. And it is needless that I should do so." To this I hope your Lordship will allow me briefly to reply:—1. That, on referring to my former letter, you will find that I expressed no opinion whatever, as being my own, either upon "money" or upon "poverty." I expressed myself as "halting between two opinions,"—that of your Lordship, and that of the founder of the Christian Faith,—and as earnestly wishing to be favoured by you with grounds for decision. 2. I therefore quoted "no passages of Scripture in support of" my "opinions." 3. If I am wrong in thinking that your doctrine and that of Christ are conflicting on the point in question; or if I am wrong in attributing to you the words that I have attributed; or, finally, if even I am wrong in my opinions upon "money and poverty," it is very disconsolate to be told by your Lordship that "it is needless" that you should enter into a correspondence, in order to correct my errors. I have been taught from infancy that to harbour an error on a religious doctrine is to incur eternal perdition. If, therefore, I have been correctly taught in this particular, the question arises whether it be "needless" to save a soul. 4. As your Lordship complains of "incessant occupations," I shall be very well satisfied, if, when a few leisure moments occur, you deign to set me right on this matter; and, to avoid a "protracted" correspondence, I promise to be convinced the moment I obtain sufficient proof.

But as your Lordship writes,—"I am glad to have had the opportunity of disavowing the sentiments which you have ascribed to myself,"—the matter, now that I have cited the notes of another person, taken as the sermon was delivered, stands on another ground than *my* assertion alone; and your Lordship, doubtless, will find some leisure moment, not only to see how far such notes agree with the contents of the MS. sermon in question, but likewise to favour me with the result of the comparison.

Should your Lordship still "disavow," in the main, "the sentiments which I have attributed" to you, then, this would at once settle the matter,—would not only imply that two or three persons who took notes of the sermon, wrote that which was not spoken, (a thing scarcely possible) but also that your Lordship's doctrine of wealth and poverty is not found to be conflicting with that of Christ.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Bishop,

Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant,

E. P. MEREDITH.

To the Right Reverend,
The Lord Bishop of Llandaff.

Bishop's Court, Llandaff,
August 22nd, 1865.

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter this morning received. The twelve pages which you have been pleased to send me, quite confirm the anticipation which led me to say that my incessant occupations would not allow me to enter upon a correspondence which might possibly be a protracted one. I must again say, with all respect, that I have no time for controversial correspondence, and must therefore decline it.

You are quite right in saying that I omitted certain words from a passage quoted from your letter. I did so purposely, because I had no wish to disclaim that I think it a "good (thing) to make such good use of money as," Mr. W. Jones made.

As to the rest of the extract, I disclaimed what you imputed to me, and said that my sermon did not warrant your conclusions. With respect to my own opinions, I cannot doubt that you give me credit for speaking the truth; for if you did not, you would, I presume, not trouble yourself to write to me at all.

With respect to my sermon, I admit my responsibility for what I actually said, but not for your inferences from what I said, which I have disavowed; nor for the notes of your short-hand reporter, which are palpably incorrect. Not to say that a sermon is to be judged as a whole, one passage modifying and explaining another, your notes ascribed to me what I never said,—single words substituted for others, and paragraphs put into my mouth which I never spoke.

If you expressed no opinions of your own, and gave no interpretation of passages of Scripture in support of your own opinions, your letter, at least, impressed *me* with the idea that you did hold certain opinions, held by parties who disagree with the teaching of our Church, and that you thought they were supported by Holy Scripture. As I did not enter into a discussion upon these opinions, or even name them, you cannot complain of my having imputed them to you. My only object was to show that *you* had mistaken *me*. If you do not hold any such opinions as I imagined, to discuss them would only have been giving you needless trouble.

My words—"and it is needless to do so," were not intended to make you "disconsolate;" neither do I think they ought to do so. The Bishop, no doubt, is the general Superintendent of his Diocese, but the duties he has to *perform, as such*, are quite sufficient, and more than sufficient to occupy his time. If individuals are in doubt or spiritual difficulty, they have their own minister to go to. In Monmouth you have more than one from whom you can seek advice. If you are conscientiously following what you believe to be the teaching of our Lord in the four Gospels, on the subject of poverty and riches,, it does not seem to me that this is such a "harbouring of error" as to "incur eternal perdition," I should rather believe that even if you are mistaken on such a question, what St. Paul says (Philip. iii. 15.) will be realised in the experience of a conscientious follower of what he believes to be the truth in this matter.

You will please to observe that I am not saying that you hold any

false opinions. I am only wishing to show that you must not, as you say, be discomforted because the Bishop commends you to your own Pastor, and declines to enter into controversy.

As I could not say more than I have done, without interfering with my daily duties, I must beg to express a hope that you will not think it necessary to reply to this letter.

And I remain, Sir, your obedient Servent,

A. LLANDAFF.

Evan Powell Meredith, Esq.
Agincourt Square, Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth.
August 30th, 1865.

MY LORD BISHOP,

I beg your Lordship's indulgence once more, while I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd inst., and submit a few words in reference, to its contents.

Your Lordship persists in denying that you taught that riches are valuable, and poverty is an evil, and that you praised the act of accumulating the former in order to avoid the latter. The notes of your sermon, taken by a short-hand reporter, you cashier, as "palpably incorrect." In these notes there may be some unimportant words at variance with your Lordship's utterance; but the question is—whether the whole of that part of your sermon, which I submitted to you in my last letter, is not substantially correct, and a very good report of that portion of your discourse. It is very singular that two or three short-hand writers should have, all of them, at the time, written down a number of concatenated sentences which your Lordship never uttered. It is also singular that I myself, and many others of your hearers, imagined that we heard you speak the words which I have attributed to you, but which you disclaim. This, I submit, amounts almost to a miracle, and bears some analogy to that wrought at the Pentecostal Feast of yore, when persons of different languages, all at once, heard an Apostle speaking in their respective vernacular tongues. It is likewise rather wonderful that your Lordship, preaching from a text, part of which was—"money is a defence," should have said nothing in praise of money,—should have told us neither that wealth was good nor poverty an evil. If you persist in denying that you spoke in praise of riches, you must, by parity of reason, admit that your sermon was neither textual nor doctrinal, and therefore not a pattern of perfection to be followed by the great number of your clergy, who were present. I do not, however, by this, mean that your sermon was not good,—all I mean is, that it would not have been good, had you not spoken in praise of money.

But as you take exception to the correctness of the short-hand reporter's notes, why did not your Lordship write, in your last letter, some half a dozen sentences from your sermon on the point in question, where you speak of riches and poverty, and thereby show wherein both the

reporter and I are wrong? Would not this be the fairest and most candid manner of settling the matter in dispute? Would not this be giving evidence that I and others are wrong, and your Lordship right? But you give no proof whatever of what you allege,—you simply say—"you appear to have mistaken what I said"—"I disclaim what you impute to me"—"my sermon does not warrant your conclusions," &c. But in order to believe your disavowal, my Lord, I must disbelieve the evidence of my own senses, which, of all species of evidence, is the most convincing. Disbelieve this I cannot. Much as I would wish to rely upon your Lordship's words of denial, yet the words in your sermon regarding money, &c., still ring loudly in my ears, and, in the scale of evidence, overwhelmingly outweigh your expressions of disavowal in your letters. Methinks I still hear the echo of your Lordship's sweet-sounding voice exclaiming,—"Poverty is a source of unbounded evil!"—"wealth contributes to the comforts and adornments of life!" &c. And the notes of the short-hand reporter convince me of the reality, and, in the main, the correctness of this mellifluous echo.

But as your Lordship himself writes that you have no wish to disclaim that you "think it a good thing to make such good use of money as Mr. Wm. Jones made," this concession alone is sufficient to establish the grounds of my original complaint; namely,—*that such a doctrine is diametrically opposed to that taught by Jesus.* This is the very point in question; and this is the point on which, while you refuse to discuss it, and yet, at length, admit the grounds of my charge, you appear to me directly to contradict the founder of the Christian Faith. Jesus says that you shall make *no use at all* of money, and that when you start on a journey—for instance, to Monmouth to preach, you shall "provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purse, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves." (Matth. x. 9. 10.) But *you* teach that it is a good thing to make good use of money; and, doubtless, you make that use of it, coming to Monmouth to preach probably with "gold and silver in your purse," with "two coats," and, certainly with "shoes" on your feet; all of which, are directly opposed to the command Jesus gave to the preachers of his Gospel. You say that it is a good thing to amass wealth, and at one's death, like Mr. William Jones, to make a bequest of it for the purpose of establishing a school to teach boys Greek and Latin, and of erecting houses to shelter old men and women; but Jesus says—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;" and, as a reason for his injunction, adds—"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matth. vi. 19. 21.) These passages, added to those adduced in my former letters, are amply sufficient to establish the fact that your Lordship and Jesus entertain directly opposite views as to riches, even according to your own avowal of your belief, written with your hand.

Your Lordship writes,—"With respect to my own opinions, I cannot doubt that you give me credit for speaking the truth." In this, your Lordship is perfectly correct:—I give you full credit for speaking the truth in almost all that you said at Monmouth, about money and poverty, Nearly the whole that you said on these points, although at perfect variance with doctrines said to have been taught by Jesus, almost 2000 years ago, yet appeared to me at the time you were preaching, and does

still appear, to be founded on solid facts, and to be incontrovertible. But this is to make the Bishop of Llandaff right, and Jesus of Nazareth wrong, which is unquestionably the case in the present instance. There is no doubt that "poverty is a source of unbounded evil,"—that wealth is a great blessing,—that exertions to acquire wealth are commendable,—that money has in a thousand instances "relieved a poor man from his troubles and distresses, and made a miserable home a happy one,"—that poverty aggravates the afflictions of the poor man in sickness,—that wealth, by enabling the rich to obtain the necessary comforts of life, lightens his sufferings,—that, in a word, all that your Lordship said, in contrasting poverty and wealth is big with truth. Would that I could say the same of Jesus's doctrine of poverty and riches! As your Lordship's teaching on these matters is evidently right, so Jesus's inculcations are glaringly wrong. Every-day experience and observation teach that nothing can be more erroneous than to say,—"Blessed are ye poor,"—"blessed are ye that hunger,"—"woe unto you that are rich!"—"woe unto you that are full!" Human feeling bears testimony against the correctness of these declamations. To be *poor* and *hungry* is, unfortunately, too well known by thousands to be one of the chief sources of human misery and immorality. Such a doctrine is not only untrue, but fraught with evil tendency. It forbids the exercise of one's mental and physical powers, for the purpose of satisfying hunger, and it makes people dream of the consequent blessedness of their superstitious lethargy.

In order to become the *blessed poor*, Jesus taught his hearers "to take no thought for the morrow,"—no thought of what they should either eat or drink,—but to resemble the birds of the air, and the lilies of the field in improvidence. Were this precept of Jesus closely and universally obeyed, society would be plunged into general ruin! Poverty, hunger, wretchedness, starvation, would be the inevitable result! Let everybody be so *thoroughly Christian* as to *take no thought for the morrow*; let none either sow, reap, or gather into barns; let none *take thought for raiment*; let none *take thought for life*; and all art, all commerce, all agricultural pursuits, all projects which aim at the future good of mankind; all secular employments whatever, must be abandoned; and the consequence will be unavoidable misery—death, to all mankind! Everybody would soon be running about hungry and naked, and the human race in a short time would become utterly extinct. The immorality of this precept, which teaches the most unqualified improvidence and recklessness, is exceeded only by its absurdity. It is however quite in harmony with Jesus's constant inculcation of the indispensable necessity of becoming poor in order to be a Christian. But a doctrine which directly implies that poverty is a blessing and riches are a curse,—that a man's virtue is to be estimated by the depth of his poverty, and his crimes are to be measured by the length of his purse, is not only most obnoxious to common sense, but extremely injurious to a people taught to regard it as Divine. It strikes at the root of all honest industry, frugality and forethought,—tends to destroy the very basis of all prosperous communities, and to make whole nations mendicants. Unlike the primitive Christians, those of the present enlightened age, deterred both by common sense and the behests of nature, do not,

fortunately, attempt to reduce this precept into practice. While many of them must perceive its erroneousness and pernicious tendency, they content themselves with pronouncing it Divine, and therefore beyond their comprehension. They find it however too absurd to be practised or even preached. Accordingly, we often find religious guides, now-a-days, in the same predicament as that in which your Lordship was at Monmouth,—unable on the one hand, to preach Jesus's doctrine of the virtue of being poor and of the crime of being rich, while, on the other, they are afraid to use very pointed language, either in deploring poverty, or in praising wealth. They are therefore obliged to steer a middle course, when they are occasionally called upon to consecrate a church or chapel, erected by a wealthy person at his own expense; lest, by praising riches, they be accused of contravening Christ's doctrine; and, on the contrary, by praising poverty, they be charged with uttering gross absurdity.

I have strong reasons for believing that, at the commencement of this correspondence, your Lordship clearly perceived that you were in a similar position to the one just described,—having had the courage to preach a very sensible sermon, showing the use of wealth and the evil of poverty, and being afterwards (which I admit to be very cruel) taxed with having proclaimed a doctrine contrary to that taught by Jesus on the same subject. Hence your fencing with the questions involved in my letters, and your refusal to admit either that you praised riches and deplored poverty, of that you believed with Jesus, the former to be a vice, and the latter a virtue. I pity the position of any man of sense, like your Lordship, who cannot, with impunity, speak out what he thinks to be true. In these days of honest and fearless inquiry into the truth of Christian matters, this however is expected to be done, at any risk; and, happily, it is now done, to the great advantage of truth, by very high dignitaries of the Church of England.—In these days, when the bonds of creeds and confessions are breaking assunder, and the huge icebergs of antiquated orthodox formularies are melting before the hot rays of scientific light, sermons are not only attentively listened to, but criticised, and submitted to the test of that book upon which they are said to be founded; and next, that book itself is submitted to the test of common sense. Accordingly, if a sermon on wealth and poverty is delivered, care is taken to see whether it is in harmony with the doctrines set forth in the credenda of the preacher, and also whether these credenda recommend themselves to human reason. If these declare that poverty is a blessing, such a declaration, as your Lordship must admit, is highly revolting to common sense; for none can fail to observe—if some are fortunate enough not to *feel*—that so far is poverty from being a blessing, that it is a positive curse,—that, when it is not a fault, it is a great misfortune, and carries with it a thousand ills, intellectual and physical. It is true that few Christians in this age, except those of monkish propensities, deliver sermons in which they decry riches and extol poverty. Just as Professor Francis William Newman, late Fellow of Balliol College, and one of the Angilican clergy, in his *Phases of Faith* (p. 156, fourth edit.) in reference to the doctrine of poverty, as taught by Jesus, remarks,—"Protestants universally reject it as a deplorable absurdity; not merely wealthy bishops, squires, and merchants, but

the poorest curate also. A man could not preach such a doctrine in a Protestant pulpit without incurring deep reprobation and contempt; but when preached by Jesus it is extolled as divine wisdom—*and disobeyed.*"

Precisely in the same manner Christians believe to be divine and yet disobey Jesus's command,—resist not evil," &c. He tells them that they are not only not to resist evil, but to go so far as, when a person strikes them on the right cheek, to turn the other also,—that when a person sues them at law and takes away their coats they are to let him have their cloaks also, —that they are to give to every one that asketh, and are not to turn away from any one who wishes to borrow of them. They are to resist none of these evils. The evil of a blow on the cheek they are to treat by turning the other to undergo the same infliction. They are not to act in self-defence, nor call for assistance, nor request a police officer to arrest the pommeling arm of their assailant, nor to run away from him; but they are to assist him so far in beating them as, when they have received a blow on one cheek, they are to turn the other towards him for a second blow. When the evil of an unjust claim is inflicted upon them in a court of law, they are not to resist such a claim, but are to pay, not only what is thus claimed, but even more than is claimed, so as to encourage dishonesty. When a thousand to-day ask alms of them, and an equal number to-morrow wish to borrow of them either goods or money, they must comply with all these requests, notwithstanding they will, by such recklessness, be certain to reduce themselves and their children to want and ruin. But where are the Christians who practise these precepts, which they contend are divine, and consequently rational and moral? Has it not been the practice of Christians, in every age and country, to resist what they imagined to be evil, to a most cruel degree? Do they not, both individually and nationally, fight in self-defence? Do they give their cloaks to persons who take their coats? Do they relieve every beggar? Do they lend money oftener than other people? Unquestionably, they do not,—they do not attempt to practise these precepts. And why? Evidently, because they are utterly impracticable. So absurd are they, that an attempt to reduce them into practice would be be considered in any one a mark of uusound mind. So inconsistent are Christians that, while in practice, they regard these precepts as most absurd, in theory they contend they are sublime divinity.

Your Lordship says that my "previous letter impressed you with the idea that I held certain opinions, held by parties who disagree with the teaching of your Church, and that I thought they were supported by Holy Scripture." By this, you appear to mean that you thought I held the opinion that the Scriptures support the doctrine, that it is a duty to cashier riches and be poor. Although I can find nothing in my previous letters that had a tendency to impress your Lordship with this idea, yet I firmly hold the opinion that the Gospels abundantly teach this doctrine; and I think I have amply shown that they do. As to the teaching of your Church, it is extremely difficult to ascertain what that is. One Bishop teaches that the Pentateuch is a fable, another Doctor of divinity and Professor of Hebrew teaches that almost the whole of the Bible is unreliable, and so on. If you mean, by the teaching of your Church, the contents of the Liturgy or "Common prayer Book," I certainly find there a sprinkling of this doctrine

which, however, was much less needed at the time this book was compiled, —the church being then supported by the force of law—than it was in the time of the Christian Fathers who led the life of anchorets, and in whose works, as I could show your Lordship, the duty of parting with all riches and the blessedness of being poor, have a conspicuous place. As to the "certain opinions" I hold, however, this letter can leave your Lordship in no doubt whatever. You will fully discover that I hold opinions which are incompatible with a belief in the Divine origin of the Christian religion, or even in the moral perfection of its alleged Founder. I do not voluntarily hold this belief. I would believe otherwise if I could; but deliberate thought and close research have driven me to this belief; being, like other mortals, passive in believing, or swayed by what I deem the preponderance of evidence. I am, however, open to conviction. Can your Lordship favour me with any valid proof that I am wrong in the views I have just expressed, touching the imperfections of the reputed Author of your religion, with whose moral rectitude Christianity must either stand or fall? I have pointed out to you a few things in which I think he is decidedly in error, and I could add some dozens of other subjects, involving important errors, on moral, intellectual, and physical points.

But you urge that your official duties are so arduous that you have no time for such a work. Still, what can be more incumbent on a bishop than to resist attacks made on the Divine origin of his religion, particularly when they are made, as in the present time, from almost every quarter, within as well as without the pale of his Church. The short way of dealing with what Christians term infidels, namely, to apply to them the fire, the fagot, the axe, the gibbet, and other engines of cruelty and death, is now outgrown by the civilization and enlightenment of the age. The Anglican church will now scarcely contend that the *Auto-da-fe* is the best means of conversion, or that the Star Chamber is the most effectual antidote to unbelief. This, is the "age of reason" and of fact. Will your Lordship still say that you cannot spare time to advance reasons and facts in proof of the truth of the religion which you preach? I have no doubt that, like me, you love truth, and are eager to embrace it, wherever found, although we may differ as to what is true and what is false. Well then, let me endeavour to move you by stating that, because I believed my views of the Christian religion to be true, and wished to convince others of the truth of these views, I have—although, like your Lordship, I had onerous duties to discharge in my own avocation—just spent upwards of £500, and some years of valuable time, in order to make these views known to my fellow-men, whom I consider to be grossly misled by their religious guides. Can you spare nothing—neither time nor *money*, which you told us was "a defence"—in order to expose these strange doctrines of mine, which doubtless you would consider not only erroneous but highly dangerous? Or, at least, can you have no time to disprove the charges I have just made in this letter against the Author and Finisher of your faith? I hope you can; for, if I am wrong, to be put right on such a momentous matter as this, would confer upon me a boon of infinite value. But you tell me that it does not seem to you that to harbour an error in reference to the teaching of Jesus in the four Gospels, on the subject of poverty and riches,

incurs eternal perdition. I am very glad to know this. I was not however aware that even the least error was not a sin which, however small, deserved "eternal perdition." This is to me a new Christian doctrine. You add that, even if I am mistaken on such a question, you should rather believe that "what St. Paul says, (Philip. iii. 15.) will be realised in the experience of a conscientious follower of what he believes to be the truth in this matter." Not to mention the apparent irrelevancy of the passage cited by your Lordship to my case, I must confess that I have no faith in St. Paul, although he says he has been in the third heaven. Nor can your Lordship wonder at this, when I remind you that this saint—like all the followers of Pythagoras, and like most of the Christian Fathers,—believed that it was a moral virtue to deal in *pious frauds*, or to tell untruths in order thereby to promote the interest of Christianity, and triumphantly asked,—"If the truth of God hath more abounded through my LIE *unto his glory*, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" (Rom. iii. 7.) Your Lordship is so well acquainted with the history and character of the primitive Christians, in regard to the fabriction of tales, forgeries, &c., that you can feel not the least doubt as to what St. Paul means by this expression.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Bishop,

Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant,

E. P. MEREDITH.

To the Right Reverend,

The Lord Bishop of Llandaff.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,

May 8th, 1866.

MY LORD BISHOP,

For many long months, namely, since the 30th of August last, have I been anxiously waiting your Lordship's reply to my last letter to you, touching the moral teaching of Jesus, as represented in the Gospels. Although, in consequence of your complaint of "incessant occupations," I had, in a former letter, said that I would be satisfied with an answer at your Lordship's leisure, yet I certainly expected that, long ere now, your zeal for your religion, would move you to rebut the charges which I had brought against its Founder. Your Lordship's silence for eight months, I think, fully justifies me in concluding that you do not intend to refute any of the arguments submitted to you in proof that Christianity has no claim to a Divine origin, and that it is far from being a perfect code of morals.

Taking for granted that your Lordship declines to defend your creed, I cannot help exclaiming, how great is the degeneracy of the Christians in the present age! There was a time when a Bishop of Llandaff could write a learned "Apology for Christianity" against what had been said of it by Gibbon; and even another "Apology for the Bible," against Thomas Paine, who, in a few pages of plain sound sense, played

such havoc with this ancient Book. But in these declining days of a religion which, having been bolstered up by law from the time of Constantine to the present, and upheld by the sword, the fire, and the dungeon, until very lately, has thus lasted for nearly two thousand years, her very bishops, not only refuse to defend her, but some of them actually write voluminous books against her, while the erudite professors and doctors of her divinity, both in this country and on the continent of Europe, ply their pens to depict her hideousness!

However, before the Christian clergy can be consistent, or even honest, they are bound either to defend or openly abandon their religion; for *they* are *paid* "defenders of the faith." If they continue to recieve the emoluments derived from being professors and teachers of this religion, and yet advance neither arguments nor facts in behalf of its tenets, when its errors and fallacies are exposed to the world, their conduct can hardly be reconciled with any sound idea of justice. They are loud in their cries that "infidelity spreads at an alarmingly rapid rate," and that "Infidels" make terrible onslaughts on their religion; but they seldom or never manfully, fearlessly, and frankly meet these men, either in the press, or on the platform, to discuss and defend courteously, fairly, and soberly the grounds of their own belief, and the reasonableness of the dogmas they preach. Every year they call for thousands of pounds sterling to convert savages in distant climes, while they make no attempt to convince the multitudes of open disbelievers in Christianity, who surrounnd them at home, and who challenge proof of the truth of their religion. Every year they demand and obtain of the devotees to their faith vast sums of money, to support Home Missionaries in populous cities and towns, while, within a stone's throw of their own churches and chapels, in these towns, there are, every Sunday, large congregations of sceptics and avowed disbelievers, listening to discourses the professed and published purpose of which is to disprove the truth of the Bible and the Divine origin of the Christian Faith. Why do not the clergy try to save the souls of these multitudes? Why not make their appearance in these assemblies, where they are weekly invited, and where they would be treated with the utmost courtesy? If they have any *real* proofs to offer of the soundness of their creed, would not such proofs shine to an advantage, when put to the test of criticism in such places as these? If they wish to have a Home Missionary field wherein they can be of real service to Christianity, where can they have better than one of the numerous Secularistic congregations that meet every Sabbath day close to their doors? To go among these with their "Word of Truth," would be manly, rational, generous, pious!

I shall only add that, as your Lordship appears utterly to have declined to answer my last letter on the question of the Divine origin of your religion, I must beg permission to publish the whole of this correspondence. The subject being thoroughly of a public character, and of paramount importance to every human being,—so important that it involves the question of the truth of Christianity—your Lordship cannot possibly have any objection to the step I now propose.

Should your Lordship have a predilection for any Periodical, or organ through the medium of which our letters shall be published, be pleased to

name such, and I will take care that a copy of the whole be sent to it.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Bishop,

Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant,

EVAN POWELL MEREDITH.

To the Right Reverend,
The Lord Bishop of Llandaff.

London, (only till Saturday),
May 10th, 1866.

SIR,

I beg to say that I considered our correspondence closed long ago.

If you think fit to publish it, I have no power to prevent you from doing so. But you have obviously no right to do it. If you had at first avowed the principles which you afterwards professed, it would have been a very different matter. But you made no such avowal, and I cannot conceive that letters which one gentleman has been induced under such circumstances to write to another, are in any sense public, or that the receiver of them has a right to make them so.

If you fulfil your purpose, I request that you will add this to the others, and remain,

Sir, your obedient Servant,

A. LLANDAFF.

Evan Powell Meredith, Esq.
Agincourt Square, Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
May 31st, 1866.

MY LORD BISHOP,

As your Lordship's letter of the 10th instant indicates that you were, at that time, in London, I have deferred my reply to it, till I thought you would be at Llandaff Court to receive and read it leisurely; taking for granted that, after the Whitsuntide recess of Parliament, you would not return to the work of legislating in the House of Peers, but would consider that, instead of meddling with the temporary affairs of the nation, it was more in accordance with your function, as well as with that of every other bishop or spiritual overseer, whom, to use the language of your Sacred Book, "the Holy Ghost hath made to feed the church," to be at home guarding the interests of that church; especially in these perilous times, when the truth of its doctrines is disputed, and the utility of its ceremonies denied, both within and without its pale, and when the very writings, sermons, and other discourses of the most erudite and talented men of whom it can boast, savour of sceptical views and "infidel" notions.

But to your Lordship's letter, which commences with saying—"I considered our correspondence closed long ago." Permit me to state that I utterly fail to perceive that your Lordship has any reason whatever to "consider" that, on my part, the correspondence had, by any means

been closed. In the letter with which you appear to think I had closed the correspondence, I entreated your Lordship to favour me with some valid proof that I was wrong in the views I had just stated, touching the imperfections of the reputed author of the Christian Faith, whom I showed to be in error, when teaching that to be poor is a blessing, and to be rich a crime; and when inculcating the absurd and mischievous doctrine, that it is the duty of mankind to take no thought of earthly things. I implored you to convince me of my error in this all-important matter. But you did not deign to favour me with any sort of an answer. You left me for more than eight months to labour under this dangerous, and, as your church would say, damnable error; and when, after the lapse of this long period, I again apply to you, your Lordship cooly writes—"I considered our correspondence closed long ago." For considering so, however, I can see no just ground.

I am astonished that your Lordship should be so strongly opposed to the publicity of our correspondence on a religious point of so great importance as that which we have been discusssing—one which so deeply concerns the Christian public, and one which according to its very nature, has not the slightest tinge of private character, and will not admit of the shadow of secrecy. You, my Lord, however, thus interdictorily protest,—"You have obviously no right to do it;" and you add,—"I cannot conceive that letters which one gentleman has been induced, under such circumstances, to write to another, are in any sense public, or that the receiver of them has a right to make them so." I do not exactly know whether, by the word, "right," your Lordship means legal or moral right; but I should think you mean the latter; for in this case there can be no question as to the legal right. With reference to the moral right of publishing letters, this depends upon the circumstances connected with them, and the nature of the subject of correspondence. When the subject is of a private character; or when the letters are written with the mutual understanding, either expressed or understood, that the correspondence is to be kept secret—in other words, is to be confidential;" or when the publication of such letters would inflict an injury on either of the parties; or when more harm than good is likely to be done by their publicity,—under either of these circumstances, at least, according to the popular notion of moral right and moral wrong, a person, apparently, would have no *moral* right to publish letters received from another. But both the nature of our subject and the circumstances under which our correspondence took place, are very different from those just stated. They are these:—Your Lordship came to Monmouth and preached a sermon to an audience numbering about two hundred people, amongst whom were some thirty of the clergy of your diocese. Portions of that sermon were published in several of the provincial newspapers. Shortly after, I wrote a letter to you maintaining that your sermon was not Evangelical,—that there was "a striking difference between the doctrine which you had propounded, and that which pervades the whole of the four Gospels, as having been set forth by Jesus,"—furnishing you, at the same time, with ample proof of the discrepancy, and soliciting your explanation, in order that I might therefrom know whether I was to believe your doctrine or that of the Gospels. To this implied

charge of heterodoxy, you replied. After further correspondence, I ultimately told you that I believed the doctrine you had inculcated in your sermon was right, and that that taught by Jesus, as reported in the Gospels, was erroneous. This declaration, at once, silenced you. Now, is there anything in a correspondence of this nature, and under these circumstances which *morally* debars me from the right to publish it? Is there not in it, on the other hand, everything that calls for its publicity? Have not the people to whom you preached at Monmouth, as well as the rest of the public, a perfect right to see your sermon criticised, and compared with the doctrine taught in the books they regard as Divine, and therefore infallible? Have they not also a perfect right to see these books likewise criticised, and to avail themselves of any and every aid to the exercise of their reason and common sense, in forming an opinion touching the degree of reliance which is to be placed on them, as a perfect code of morals? What can possibly be in our correspondence which deprives me of the right to publish it? You will pardon me for submitting that it is not more private in its character than your sermon, which is its principal subject, and that I have as much right to publish it, as you had to preach at Monmouth.

As part of your Lordship's protest against publicity, you write,—"If you had, at first avowed the principles which you afterwards professed, it would have been a very different matter. But you made no such avowal." No: nor do I think it was necessary. Such avowal was foreign to the matter upon which I wrote to you; namely, that your Lordship had preached a sermon the tenour of which appeared to me diametrically opposed to the doctrines taught in the Gospels. To rebut this charge, it mattered not to you, (nor does it matter now, when the letters are about to be published) whether I was a Church of England man, a Nonconformist, a Presbyterian, a Roman Catholic, a Deist, an Atheist, a Mohametan, a Brachmin, a Boodhist, or whatever I was, as to religious views. You had simply to deal with the allegations I had made in my letter to you, and to take them for what you thought they were worth. I did not, however, attempt at misleading you in either of my letters:—I did not state that I was a Christian. It is true that *I did not state*, at the onset, that I *was* a Deist, worshipping the only one and true God—the Creator and Governor of the universe, who is not one and yet three, and who has neither son nor daughter,—that I disbelieved in the national Deity represented in the Jewish mythology as dining with Abraham, on veal, cake, and butter, and as wrestling with Jacob all night,—that I denied that infinite Wisdom and perfect Goodness had given a book to the barbarous Jews, and another, in process of time, to a savage set of heathen fanatics who were anciently Nazareans, Ebionites, &c. No, I did not state to you these things. On the other hand, what I positively stated, did not justify you in jumping to the false conclusion that I was an Episcopalian of a monkish notion, on the very wing to fly to the mother-church—that of Rome—believing that it was the duty of every Christian to be poor, place all his worldly goods at the feet of his religious guides, "take no thought for the morrow," and enter into a monastry. Indeed, I wrote to you, in my first letter, several things, such as that Jesus commended the unjust steward,

saying that he had "done wisely" in cheating his master, and that he urged Christians to make "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," from which I would have expected a deeply read and learned gentleman, possessing the usual sagacity of a bishop, to infer that I disbelieved in the infallibility of the Gospels, and therefore in the Divine character of the Christian creed. But all you did, on this head, was to recommend me to seek religious information of the Anglican priests and deacons of my own neighbourhood, whom you call "Ministers;" whereas you had no reason to believe that the clergy in this neighbourhood were accustomed to think more closely and deeply, on theological matters, than the clergy of the Anglican church generally; the greater number of whom, by far, as you must well know, *cannot*, or *will not* compose the sermons which, after purchasing them at so much per dozen from some advertiser, they inarticulately read over a desk, rattling as well as they can in other men's brains. By this time, you can probably perceive that you advised me to seek information of a class of men (considered as a class, but admitting of some honourable, although heterodox exceptions,) quite incompetent to solve my religious doubts.

But supposing that I "had at first avowed the principles which "I "afterwards professsd," what would have been the result? What would have been the real difference to your Lordship? I admit that you are perfectly correct in saying, "it would have been a very different matter." But I have to complain that, to persons who are not acquainted with the conduct of the paid teachers of Christianity towards those who deny the super-human character of their religion and the moral soundness of their dogmas, your real meaning, in the expression just cited, is not very intelligible. To me, however, who, for the last thirty years, have closely observed the manner in which persons of my present religious opinions,—whatever may be their literary acquirements, however brilliant their talents, however large their stock of information, however deep their researches after truth, and however candid and gentlemanly they may be in their controversial tone—are deliberately and systematically treated by the clerical fraternity, now that public opinion has become too strong for them to apply the dungeon, the fagot, and the fire, in order to silence such "disturbers," —to me, I say, the meaning of your Lordship is clear as meridian day.

If I "had at first *avowed the principles I professed*," your Lordship, in accordance with the usual practice of the Anglican clergy, would not deign to favour me with a reply—would retreat into a fortress of unapproachable taciturnity—would hide yourself behind a rampart of profound silence, deeming it beneath your dignity, fairly and fearlessly to meet the arguments of a Deist—a believer in only one God, and a disbeliever in the Christian religion, which teaches there are three distinct personal Deities, and yet absurdly maintains that its three personal Gods are only one personal God!

Of this, I have, as proof, the obvious meaning of your Lordship's own words—that it is because I "made no such avowal," you "cannot conceive that letters which one gentleman has been induced, under such circumstances," (namely, the circumstances that the one is a Deist and the other does not know it,) "to write to another, are in any sense public, or that the receiver of them has a right to make them so." *Ergo*, a Deist who

interchanges letters with a Christian, on subjects pertaining to the Christian religion, has no right to make these letters public, unless, at the onset, the Deist has stated to the Christian his religious belief! But the moment he makes "such avowal," the Christian recoils!

It is an undeniable and notorious fact that the clergy, from the Primate down to the meanest curate in the land, have a perfect detestation to discuss the ground of their belief. Their whole history testifies that they have always been inveterate enemies to free and unfettered inquiry into religious matters, or into any scientific matters, real knowledge of which they foresee likely to unmask the error of their cherished dogmas. Indeed, until of late it was a maxim of all Christendom that "Ignorance is the mother of godliness." Accordingly, we find the clergy in the time of Henry the Eighth, the very father of Protestantism, managing to have an ancient law re-enacted, which decreed that any layman in whose possession the Bible was found, should be burned alive; and also to have another law afterwards made,(34 & 35. Hen. viii. c. 1.) which enacted that if any "women or artificers" persisted in reading this book, they were "to be burned" in like manner. And well would it be for the interest of Christianity, if these laws were still in force. The principal causes of the vast number of unbelievers in the Divine authority of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, now in England, are the following three things,—the invention of printing, the translation of the Bible into English by Tyndale, and the establishment of schools, particularly Sunday schools, which enable the people to read the Bible, and in which the truth of its contents is canvassed. Had it not been for these three things, the Bible would, at this moment, be a sealed book to most of the laity, and, consequently, the ancient universal belief in its divine origin, unshaken.

But to revert: the clergy have been invited, over and over, to discuss, in a calm and dispassionate manner, with men, at least, quite their equals in learning, morality, and social position, the increasingly prevalent objections raised against the Bible, as an unerring code of morals and religion. But all in vain. Many an able article, by writers on the utility of Free Inquiry, has been headed with—"Why do the clergy avoid discussion?" But *they* still sit unconcerned in the chair of legitimacy, pride themselves in the orthodoxy of their antiquated creed, and, like Galileo's persecutors, deem it impious to question the truth of doctrines held sacred by so large a portion of the human race. I have, therefore, every reason to believe that, in the same manner the Bishop of Llandaff would have treated me, had I, "at first avowed the principles I afterwards professed;" and therefore "it would have been a very different matter."

I have the honour to be, my Lord Bishop,

Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant,

E. P. MEREDITH.

To the Right Reverend,

The Lord Bishop of Llandaff.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN THE REVEREND

JOHN FAIRFAX FRANCKLIN, M. A.

AND

EVAN POWELL MEREDITH, F. A. S. L.

Whaplode, Spalding,
22nd December, 1865.

SIR,

I have just perused some extracts from your horrible and blasphemous production, entitled "The Prophet of Nazareth." Your pestilent doctrines prove, beyond all doubt, you are nothing more than a Deist. But even that title I conceive too good for such an evil spirit in human form! Surely, if *you*, in your self-sufficiency, choose to be an unbeliever in the Gospel records, on which *we*, who are Christians, depend for our comfort here, and our rest hereafter, it cannot be right (even humanly speaking), for you to strive to undermine the faith of thousands, "who love the Lord Jesus, and look for his appearing!" And, while plying your ungodly pen in the service of Satan, remember this plain and undeniable fact, viz: that *you* and such as you, who cast from you all hope in Christ, and faith in his promises, *risk everything* and *lose all*, by your unbelief, if *your* creed should be *erroneous*, while *we*, who believe in the doctrines of the Cross, even if our creed is in *mere fables, risk nothing, and can lose nought*, by humbly believing that there is neither hope nor safety *here*, nor salvation *hereafter*, to sinful man, but only in the *name* and through the *mediation* of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

If, then, *you* are content to take a *blind* leap in the *dark*,—
"O'er that deep gulf, which nature cannot shun,"
let *others*, if possible, *see* their way in safety to that "bourne from whence no traveller returns," and "so *run here*, that they may *obtain hereafter*."

Wishing you a clearer perception of things eternal, and a more humble mind, (as a *finite* creature) in treating upon matters which appertain to *Infinity*,

I am yours,
JOHN FAIRFAX FRANCKLIN, M. A.
Vicar of Whaplode.

Mr. Evan Powell Meredith,
Monmouth.

Whaplode, Spalding,
4th Januury, 1866.

SIR,

Your silence in respect to the few lines which I addressed to you in reply to the "extracts" which I received from your pestilent work, entitled "The Prophet of Nazareth," proves one of two things:—either my observations, few and simple as they were, were unanswerable, or that you are so self-satisfied and so besottedly self-conceited as to think any one venturing to differ from your views beneath the notice of such a learned philosopher as yourself.—I will assume the latter to be the cause of your silence, and must, therefore, be permitted to observe that, as your unbelief in the history, life, and doctrines of the "Prophet of Nazareth," as received and believed by Christians, arises evidently from your inability to understand and comprehend the wondrous statements contained in the New Testament, you, therefore, repudiate the Christian creed, from the *difficulties* contained therein, and so fall back upon Deism, as being a system more easily comprehended, &c. Sir, if such indeed be your logic, and such the cause of your infidelity, how is it you are not a "*Necessitarian*," or a believer in the "*doctrine of chance*," instead of a Deist? For the belief in the existence of a God, who is *omnipotent*, is as much surrounded by incomprehensible *difficulties* and "things *hard to be understood*" as is the Christian creed, which you reject, simply for its being *incapable of proof or reason*. You are a *Deist;* and yet, how do you understand or explain the *difficulties* which appertain to the being and nature of an *eternal God?*—of one who is the uncaused cause of everything?—of a being who has no relation to space, not being a part here, or a part there, or a whole anywhere? And yet such a being is God! Or, what think you of a being who is *omniscient*, who cannot know the future actions of men?—or, if his omniscience enables him to know this, what think you of the *contingency* of human actions?—or, if human actions are *not* contingent, what think you of the *morality* of these actions?—of the distinction, for instance, which exists between vice and virtue—between crime and innocence—sin and duty?—Or, what think you of the existence of moral and natural evil in the world—the work of a Being *who is infinite in wisdom, in power, in goodness, and in duration*? And yet, as I have before

said, such a being is God, in whom *you profess* to believe! Why, sir, you *must* see that your position, as a Deist, is *untenable*. And I could easily multiply my questions as to the being and attributes of a God, the bare contemplation of which would speedily drive you and your boasted philosophy from Deism to *Atheism*, as readily as the contemplation of the unfathomable wonders of Christianity have driven you from that creed to Deism!

Be more humble-minded, Sir! Be more just, Sir, in dealing with "the things which belong to the peace" of thousands! Read more *carefully*, (to such an *infidel* as yourself, I dare not say *prayerfully*) the acknowledged mysteries of creation, preservation, and salvation, before you glory in elevating the standard of Infidelity to your *fellow-creatures*, and (as I before said) take *"a blind leap in the dark,"* when death shall terminate your *present* existence, and plunge you into the vast and unknown *future*, which lies beyond the region of *time*, *space*, and the *grave*.

I am, Sir, yours, more in pain than anger, truly,

JOHN FAIRFAX FRANCKLIN, M. A.
Vicar of Whaplode, &c., &c., &c.

To Mr. Evan Powell Meredith,
Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
January 25th, 1866.

REVEREND SIR,

I find that I owe you a long-standing epistolary debt. Although I was utterly passive in incurring this liability, yet you very severely press me for payment. On the 22nd of December last, you thus rendered me *debito inopinato* to you, by writing to me a letter on the heterodoxical character of my new book, "The Prophet of Nazareth;" and on the fourth of the ensuing month, giving me very few "days' grace," you take proceedings to obtain immediate payment, serving me with a *writ* (certainly more like a writ *de hæretico comburendo* than a *capias ad respondendum*), in the shape of a very long letter, of course, attended with the usual *corresponding* costs, and thus making me your epistolary debtor to a far greater extent. But you appear to have suddenly stayed proceedings, even before I had entered an appearance. However, now that I am a little flush of that *argent comptant*, called leisure, permit me, Reverend Sir, to wipe off some of this cumbrous debt.

You commence your second letter thus:—"Your silence in respect to the few lines which I addressed to you, in reply to the 'extracts' which I received from your pestilent work, entitled 'The Prophet of Nazareth,' proves one of two things:—either my observations, few and simple as they were, were unanswerable, or that you are so self-satisfied and so besottedly self-conceited, as to think any one, venturing to differ from your views, beneath the notice of such a learned philosopher as yourself! I will asssume the latter to be the cause of your silence." In answer to this congeries of strange allegations, I have to say,—*first*, that neither

my publisher ever sent you any "extracts" whatever of "The Prophet of Nazareth." As for myself, I did not even know of the existence of your Reverence, individually, until I had received your first letter. You must have been presented with a copy of these "extracts" by some of your friends. Some thousands of them have been distributed amongst gentlemen of literary note, both lay and clerical. *Secondly*, your opprobrious language, in the passage just cited from your letter, as well as that which pervades the two epistles I have received from you, persuades me that you are a *true* Christian, and a close follower of the example given you by "the Author and Finisher of your faith." "Pestilent work"—"besottedly self-conceited"—"pestilential doctrines,"—"horrible and blasphemous production,"&c., are phrases which bear sufficiently close resemblance to the terms angrily applied by Jesus to the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and other people, from whom he differed on religious grounds; such as, "Ye serpents"—"ye generation of vipers"—"ye hypocrites"—"ye fools and blind"—"ye blind guides"—"ye are like unto whited sepulchres"—your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness," &c. I would, however, advise you, Reverend Sir, not to follow the example of Jesus so closely as to use such scurrilous language again; for it serves only to demoralise your own mind, and to inflame the passions of those to whom you address it. But perhaps you have been discharging that part of your clerical duty, namely, preaching, for a great number of years. If so, it may be that you use opprobrious language, in writing, as well as in speaking on religious subjects, quite unconsciously, and are therefore scarcely culpable for the offensive terms which you have used in your letters to me. For you must be well aware that a person, in his pulpit, may call the people whom he addresses by all manner of bad names; but that if he applied the same terms to them individually in the street, he would be savagely knocked down for his insolence. *Thirdly*, I have to complain that your logic, in the passage just cited from your letter, is deplorably bad. You say that my silence concerning what you had written to me, proved one of two things:—either that your observations were unanswerable, or that I was so besottedly self-conceited, &c., as to think them beneath my notice, and that you would assume the latter to be the cause of my silence. The cause of my silence could be attributed only to one of two things, or, in your own words, which are precisely to the same effect "proves one of two things"—one of the two things you mention, of course, exclusively! To me, this appears most singular logic, and indicative of dire want of reflection. Could not one of the following things be the cause of my silence?—could I not have been dead and buried since "the extracts" had been issued? could not your letter have been lost in its transit? could I not have been ill? could I not have been absent from home? could I not have been intensely engaged on more important matters, during the days that elapsed between your first and second epistolary missives, so as thus to be prevented from replying? could I not have thought—as indeed I did think, and would not now act otherwise, but merely for the sake of not being considered impolite—that your letter neither requested nor required a reply? could I not reasonably have thought it was useless for such people as disagreed with me in religious views, to write to me pri-

vately about my book, which was now before the public,—that the proper course for such people to take, was to write a book to confute its arguments,—and that, if they were real lovers of truth, they would, like me, spend £500 or £600, in writing, printing and publishing a book in its defence, rather than having recourse to the very cheap, but useless process of writing private letters, in defence of their attacked faith? could not a thousand other things that might be enumerated prevent me from answering your epistles? No. According to your logic, one of two things, exclusively and positively, was the cause of my silence:—either my mouth had been stopped, and my hand paralysed by your mighty "observations," or I was too proud and haughty to notice you. What an uncharitable conclusion! Of all the causes that would naturally offer themselves to your mind, as those which might possibly account for my silence, you must fix upon two of the most unfavourable to me, morally and intellectually as an alternative:—I was either too ignorant or too proud. Not only is such a conclusion morally unjust, but, as I have shown, it is logically unsound.

I hope that you are able to adduce a more rational proof than this of the Divine origin of tha credentials of your religion; otherwise, it would be a waste of time on my part to heed your invectives against my book. But permit me to ask what induced you to "*assume* the latter" of the two things, one of which, you say, must be the cause of my silence? From what data did you *assume* that the very cause of my silence was self-satisfaction and besotted self-conceit? Had you discovered anything in the book which you decry, that would lead you to this conclusion? Or, from what grounds did you *assume* this position? Of course, you know that no man who is entitled to the least notice as a philosopher, or lover of truth, *assumes* a position without being supported by what appears to him, at least, a strong probability. Pray, was it my long "silence" that made it appear probable to you that I was "besottedly self-conceited," or was it what you already knew of my besotted self-conceit, that made you think it to be the cause of my silence. Let me beg a little light on this obscure point, which involves the question of cause and effect, in which department of science, some portions of your epistles, that shall be noticed hereafter, show that you feel quite competent to give lessons.

Your first letter to me begins thus:—"I have just perused some extracts from your horrible and *blasphemous* production entitled "The Prophet of Nazareth." Had I not been certain that I lived, not only in the bigot-crushing nineteenth century, but also in England, whose people no longer believe that the fagot and the fire are the best remedy for the cure of heresy, and the rack and thumb-screw the most handy instruments to rectify the creed of an erring Christian, these *fulmina verborum* of your first missive, would have made me fear that the next document would be a *citatio* to the Holy Office, the *Camera Stellata*, the *Consistorium*, the *Curia Episcopi*, or some such other *Curia Christianitatis*; which *citatio*, after the usual *allegatio*, would be followed by a writ *de hæretico comburendo*; or, at least, one *de excommunicato capiendo, pro correctione morum, et pro salute animæ!* Such, formerly, were the proceedings of your Christianity, for which, as a priest, you should blush with burning shame!

But, Reverend Sir, be so kind as to tell me what you mean by "*blasphemous*," "*blasphemy*," &c. When, for example, you teach that the Creator of the universe talked with Adam and Eve, asking them a number of questions,—that, as three and yet one, he dined with Abraham on veal, butter, milk and cakes, washed his feet and sat down under a tree to rest, (Gen. xviii.)—that he wrestled with Jacob one whole night, and was at last overpowered by this mighty patriarch, whose name he, consequently, changed into Israel, or *God-conqueror*,—that he told Samuel utterly to annihilate the Amalekites, and slay every "man and woman, infant and suckling;" and when, on the contrary, I deny the truth of all these statements, and teach that to attribute such things to the Supreme being is highly derogatory to his character, which of us, if either, in this case, is the blasphemer? You or I? Although, in different countries, and different times past, zealots have construed almost every thing said or written against their dogmas, into *blasphemy*, yet, on the supposition of the possible real existence of such a moral offence, nothing appears to me much more repugnant to common sense than to imagine anything said against the contents of a book—whether ancient or modern—to be blasphemy. In reference to blasphemy, you appear to be in the thick fog of by-gone benighted ages, when a blasphemer was he even "qui dubitabit de fide catholica, et qui negligebat servare ea;" or, still later, in the ninth year of Will. III. (c. 32.) when an act was passed, for the direct purpose of preventing all investigation of the ground of belief in the divine authority of the Bible. You seem not to be aware that, more than half a century ago, by the praiseworthy exertions of Mr. Wm. Smith, the then Member of Parliament for the city of Norwich, an act was passed, which made it, in law, no blasphemy to discuss, in a temperate manner, any theological point whatever. Besides, if you are a close and attentive reader of Scripture, this jumbling and contradictory collection of superstitious ancient documents may have more than a little bewildered you in the matter. For the Hebrew word, in the Levitical law, (Lev. xxiv. 10—16.) rendered *to blaspheme* in the English version, means anything but what Christians call *blasphemy*, and, in different parts of the Jewish Scriptures, is rendered by our translators, into *a voice, a rod, thunder, light, noise*; and, as a verb, *to revile, polish, hate, curse, burnish, parch, heat, to be vile, to make easy, put to shame move, be swift, despise*, &c. There is again, the same confusion in the New Testament; the word, *blasphemia* is translated, in some places, *evil speaking*, in others, *railing*, &c, Jesus used the word, in connection with "an evil eye." The Jews exclaimed that he blasphemed, because he said he was a God; and Christians, ancient and modern clamour that people who say that he is not a God, blaspheme. I refer to these things simply as examples of some of the difficulties you will have to surmount, before you can give a reasonable definition of the word "blasphemous," which you have so unhesitatingly applied to my work.

You tell me with much positiveness,—"You are nothing more than a Deist. But even that title I conceive too good for such an evil spirit in human form!" Nothing more than a Deist. No: I do not aspire to be anything more. All Deists, whose names, as writers or thinkers, have

descended unto us, were most moral, noble-minded, and learned men, far advanced of the age in which they lived. But you say the title of Deist is too good for me, whom you designate "an evil spirit in human form." By "an evil spirit," you mean, of course, the Devil, or "one of his angels." Here, again, I must give you credit for being "a Christian to the backbone, at least, so far as doctrine is concerned." You orthodoxly believe in the exploded old dogma of Demonology, and appear to be certain my poor *corpus* is possessed by a demon, and therefore, that I am a demoniac. Now, you know that one of the chief signs by which Jesus said true Christians were to be distinguished, in all ages, was their power to "cast out devils." (Mark xvi. 17.) I, therefore, challenge you on your own ground, to prove that you are a real Christian—a Christian in anything more than in name and dogmas—by insisting upon you to cast out the evil spirit which, according to you, is concealed in my *forma humana*. I shall not ask you to show me the other signs of a true Christian, such as to speak with new tongues, take up serpents and drink poison with impunity, and heal the sick by merely laying your hands on them. I must, however, insist upon you, either to cast out the evil spirit which you say is in my "human form," or allow me to believe either that you are not a Christian, any more than I am, or that Jesus was erroneous as to the signs by which Christians were to be known, or that you are mistaken in supposing that I am possessed by a demon. But before you commence your exorcism, let me beg that you will tell me what you know of a spirit, either evil or good. Define its properties, in contra-distinction to those of matter, such as size, shape, weight, &c. Your knowledge of spirit must be very profound and extensive, to enable you, merely by reading a few paragraphs extracted from my writings, to ascertain positively that the author was "an evil spirit in human form." For I take it for granted that the "Vicar of Whaplode, Spalding, M. A. &c., &c., &c.," would not have written about a thing of which he, like all other people, knew, and can know utterly nothing.

In the next paragraph of your letter, you write—"If *you*, in your self-sufficiency, choose to be an unbeliever in the Gospel records, on which *we*, who are Christians, depend for our comfort here, and our rest hereafter, it cannot be right (even humanly speaking) for you to strive to undermine the faith of thousands, "who love the Lord Jesus, and look for his appearing." I do not exactly understand what you mean by, "humanly speaking." You appear to use the word "humanly" to distinguish this mode of speaking, from that of some other speaking. But, unfortunately, I have never heard any being speak, that did not speak like a human being; in other words, I have never heard any other being than a human being speak. Hence my obtuseness on this point. Do you tacitly allude to the speaking of *evil spirits*,—a thing which you must believe to have frequently occurred in the pristine days of Christianity? Or, do you refer to a still earlier period, in which such animals as Balaam's ass spoke. To speak thus, certainly, was not "humanly speaking." But, as I did not hear it, I confess my utter inability to point out the difference. Leaving to you the task of distinguishing between "humanly speaking" and speaking in the manner which you had in view, when you wrote, let me

boldly tell you that I think that it *can be*, and that it *is right* for me to strive to undermine the faith of thousands, *if that faith is false*; nay, that I think it is my imperative duty to use every rational and moral means at my command to undermine such a faith. Common sense dictates to me that, when I find my fellow-creature in the wrong, it is my duty to convince him of his error, and show him the right. Your assertion, just cited, militates directly against what you professedly do yourself. Is it not one of the principal functions of your office, as a priest, to convince people of what you conceive to be their errors, and to persuade them not to "depend for their comfort here and their rest hereafter" on delusive and treacherous things? And if so, will you not be so just, or even so tolerant as to grant me the same liberty as you yourself enjoy? I, of whom you complain that I "undermine the faith of thousands," am only one *unpaid* individual; but you are one of about 500,000 *paid* Christian agents, who are daily engaged in bolstering up this faith. Besides, you have had about 2000 years to radicate your creed most deeply in the minds of the people of this country, so that it should now be ingrained in their very constitution, like the blackness in the Ethiopian's skin, or the spots in the leopard, whereas I have but just commenced to submit your dogmas to the test of criticism. Why, then, should you be so very apprehensive as to the fate of your faith? Again: are you not an advocate for sending missionaries to "the dark places of the earth," which "are full of the habitations of cruelty," in order to convert the inhabitants thereof "from the error of their way?" Undoubtedly, like all other Christians, you are. Then, with an equal show of reason, could those people, whom you designate idolators, pagans, heathens, &c., say, like you,—"If *you*, in your self-sufficiency choose to be an unbeliever in the Divine Shasters," (the Sacred Zendavesta, the Holy Coran, or as the case may be, for you know there are hundreds of inspired books besides the Bible,) "on which *we*, who are heathens depend for our comfort here, and our rest hereafter, it cannot be right, (even humanly speaking) for you to strive to undermine the faith of thousands, who love the incarnate God Chrishna, and look for his appearing *again* in the flesh." If I have no right to criticise your faith, by parity of argument, you have no right to shake the faith of heathens; and especially have you no right to break up happy heathen families, and plunge them into misery, as your missionaries have done, in a thousand cases,—a thing which you cannot say that I do, in canvassing your creed. In fine, if *I* have no right to examine your faith, *you* have no right to preach it to me and others; you have no right to compose and circulate books, pamphlets, and tracts about it; you have no right to combat with anything that appears to you an error. If all acted upon this principle, there would be an end of all mental, moral, and religious progress.

But, apart from the *moral* right which I have to criticise and expose the errors of the Christian faith, I am justly entitled to do so on purely *secular* grounds, owing to the vast expense of maintaining this faith, a share of which, I, as a member of our commonwealth, have to bear, and that, in order to uphold a faith which, if erroneous, is worse than useless—is teeming with mischief,—of which more anon, after citing the following elegant passage from one of your epistles.—"While plying your ungodly pen in the service of Satan, remember this plain and undeniable fact, viz.

that *you* and such as you, who cast from you all hope in Christ, and faith in his promises, *risk everything*, and *lose all*, by your unbelief, if *your* creed should be *erroneous*, while *we* who believe in the doctrines of the cross, even if our creed is in *mere fables*, *risk nothing and can lose nought*, by humbly believing that there is neither hope nor safety *here*, nor salvation *hereafter* to sinful men, but only in the *name*, and through the *mediation* of our Saviour Jesus Christ." If you had carefully read my book, you would have foundt hat I deal with this thread-bare assertion which has been made a thousand times before. But let us see whether you *lose nothing*, if your *Faith is false*. I admit that an Archbishop, a Bishop, a Parson, or any Christian teacher, who enjoys large emoluments derived from the vast treasures at the disposal of this Faith, loses very little, if any, at least of riches, because his creed is erroneous. Not so, however, with the nation at large, even in a secular point of view,—not so with Christendom generally, in either a moral, an intellectual, a physical, or a pecuniary sense. If Christianity is false, has not the ocean of tears which its devotees, in every age and country, have shed for their imaginary sins, together with the ascetic privations, the foolhardy sufferings, and the unnatural mortifications of various kinds, which they have undergone, caused them to *lose* much bodily health, mental tranquillity, and real happiness? Is not the fear in which they daily live, lest they are not of the number to be saved, a source of great and incessant unhappiness? Can they "lose nought" by wasting their time, talent, and wealth, in pursuit of a delusion and an error? Do they not *lose all* the unbounded felicity which nature and obedience to its laws are capable of yielding to them; while, on the other hand, unbelievers in Christianity, who confine themselves to secular matters, and obey the laws of nature, enjoy all this happiness, despised and lost by Christians? Who, then, loses, if Christianity is false?—He who has spent a life of tears, anxiety, poverty, and every other description of misery incident to a zealot who sets at defiance the laws of nature, or he who has spent a life of happiness by observing these laws? "Risk nothing, and can lose nought," indeed! Why, if his "creed is in mere fables," as you put it, the consistent Christian *risks all* and *loses all*, while the consistent disbeliever in these "mere fables" *gains all* that is destined for man to enjoy. If "mere fables" are the foundation of your creed, has nothing been lost by the matchlessly sanguine persecutions of Christendom in all ages, and in all countries;—by the massacre of myriads of human beings in Christian wars;—by the burning of hundreds of thousands for a slight deviation of belief touching these "mere fables,"—by the slaughtering burning, and torturing of millions, "for the sake of their souls," so that the history of Christianity, at this very day, is one continuous page of unparalleled cruelty, and its annals are nothing but the records of bloodshed and carnage? Have the hundreds of millions of Christians who have perished for their faith, *lost nothing*, if your Christianity is "mere fables?" Have they not, in this case, *risked all, and lost all?*—lost, not only the enjoyment of long and happy existence, but even their lives? Is it not, therefore, very rash of you to say of a religion whose footmarks, wherever found, are impressed in a profusion of gore which countless ages will not efface, that, if it consists of "mere fables," Christendom "can lose nought?"

Even in the present age, is it no loss that, although the Christian in this country have been deprived of their power to apply the fire and the sword to one another, yet, a vast amount of immoral feeling is created by the dogmatic spirit and savage intolerance, evinced by one sect of Christians towards another, and even by individuals of the same sect, or Church towards one another? It is no loss that, at this moment, it is a notorious fact that there are more bickerings and animosity between Christians, as such, than between members of any other community in this country? If their religion is founded on "mere fables," can they "lose nought" by this immoral and, therefore, unhappy life, saying nothing of the loss sustained by the nation, at-large, from the bad effect which their reciprocal Christian malignity carries upon public morals? If Christianity is false, is there nothing to lose in that its hierophants, in every age and country, have been the greatest impediment to the march of civilization, to the advancement of scientific knowledge, and to the promotion of every scheme tending to ameliorate the condition of mankind, so that, in Christendom, all the progress that man has made in knowledge, virtue, and happiness, since the invention of Christianity, has been effected under the clamorous denunciations of a Christian priesthood, and is to be attributed to secular science alone? If Christianity is false, is there "nothing to lose" in that about 220,000,000 of human beings waste a great proportion of their valuable time, both on Sundays and week-days, to hear it preached, to pray for its success, to sing its praises, to read its sacred books, its tracts, its formularies of worship, its hymns, its voluminous commentaries, its ponderous harmonies, and its thousands of other sorts of lore, instead of devoting themselves to the study of nature, and to the habitual practice of obeying her laws, whence, as testified by daily experience, their comfort and happiness flow? If Christianity is false, can its devotees lose nought in paying annually about £150,000,000 to the clergy of the various sects or sections of this religion, for teaching them its doctrines? Is this to "risk nothing," and to "lose nought?" Would not this immense sum be spent with less loss in teaching a true, than a false system of morals? In whatever aspect this question is viewed, there can be nothing clearer than that, if Christianity is founded in "mere fables," it has been the immediate cause of more useless sufferings and irrecompensible misery to mankind than anything else, during the last 2,000 years. In the very nature of things, to propagate any error, is fraught with evil consequences, and the more extensive the propagation, and numerous those who embrace the error, the greater the evil; and this evil is further increased in proportion to the greatness of the sacrifice made to propagate and to support the error. Nothing, therefore, can be more remote from truth, more unphilosophic, more irrational, and more absurd than to write,—"*We* who believe in the doctrine of the Cross, even if our Creed is in mere fables, risk nothing, and can lose nought."

In your second letter, you write,—"As your unbelief in the history, life, and doctrines of the Prophet of Nazareth, as received and believed by Christians, arises, evidently, from your inability to understand and comprehend the wondrous statements contained in the New Testament, you, therefore, repudiate the Christain Creed, from the *difficulties* contained

therein, and so fall back upon Deism, as being a system more easily comprehended." Now, almost the whole of this is purely gratuitous,—devoid of the shadow of a proof. I have not evinced any "unbelief in the history, life, and doctrines of the Prophet of Nazareth, as received and believed by Christians." If you read my book, you will find therein that, invariably, I take for granted that the contents of the New Testament are genuine, and that Jesus did and said all that his biographers, in the Gospels, attribute to him. All that I have done, is to point out the absurdity, immorality, contradiction, fallacy, and folly of many things which are in the Gospels attributed to Jesus. I cannot regard, as God, a person in whom I see glaring imperfections. I cannot bend the knee before a fallible being. But you say that I "repudiate the Christian Creed, evidently, from my inability to understand and comprehend the wondrous statements contained in the New Testament." Pray, what evidence have you that this is the cause of my repudiation of your faith? And what proof have you of my "inability" to "understand and comprehend the wonders of the New Testament?" You should have pointed out some passages in my writings which showed my inability to understand the wonders recorded in the credentials of your faith, before you ventured upon this reckless assertion. Assuming that, in understanding and power of comprehension, together with literary attainments, I occupy a position, about the mediety of the intellectual scale of human beings, in the present age, would not your assertion, as to my inability to understand the Gospels, directly imply that, if these Gospels were Divine, God had given, for the moral guidance of man, books which he could not understand? and would not such an assertion be what Christians would call outright blasphemy? But I humbly think that I *do* understand these Gospels, so far as I have dealt with them. When, for example, I read (Mark xiii. 32.) that Jesus said he did not know when he should come to destroy this world, I understand that he did not consider himself omniscient. Admitting words to be the vehicles of ideas, what would you, who comprehend "the wondrous statements contained in the New Testament," understand by such an expression? When I read that Jesus told those who wished to become his disciples, to hate their fathers, mothers, wives, children, brothers, and sisters, and forbade them to bury their nearest and dearest relatives, (Luke xiv. 26. Matth. viii. 22.) I understand that he meant that those people should do what he bade them, and that—as it is a moral vice to harbour hatred—it was immoral in Jesus to inculcate this doctrine. For it seems to me that whatever is immoral in man, is so in a supposed, or, if possible, in a real God. What think you? can you see that I fail to understand or comprehend these "wondrous statements contained in the New Testament?" When I read that Jesus enjoined his hearers not to provide for the future—to take no thought for the morrow,—illustrating his meaning by reference to the improvident fowls of the air, and the inanimate lilies of the field; and when I find that the whole tenour of his doctrine was in perfect harmony with this absurd precept, I understand that he really intended to inculcate this pernicious dogma, which, if reduced into general practice, was calculated to plunge society into universal ruin, starvation, death! (Matth. vi.) When I read that he called people fools,

and yet taught that whoever called his brother a fool was in danger of hell, common sense makes me think that he was, not only such as people of the present age would call impolite, but also that he was very inconsistent. (Matth. v. 22; xxiii. 17, 19.) What do you, who, of course, are able to "understand and comprehend these wondrous statements," think of them? Do you think that, in taking the plain and obvious meaning of Jesus's words, I am wrong, and that, therefore, he said one thing while he meant another?—that he was either unable or unwilling to make himself understood to his audience, and to us of the present age? If you say that he did not wish his hearers to understand him clearly, I admit that analogy will strongly support you; for we have a great number of instances in which Jesus concealed his real meaning from the multitude, telling his disciples that unto themselves only it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and not to the vulgar; "lest, at any time, they should be converted." (Mark iv. 11.) You tell me that Deism is a system more easily comprehended than Christianity, and that I have embraced the former, because I am unable to comprehend the latter. I must, however, declare that, in the Gospels, which are the foundation of Christianity, I see nothing difficult of comprehension. These productions are simple enough, even childish, in many parts. It is of their absurdity that I complain. I suppose that, just as you attribute my unbelief in Christianity to my inability to "understand and comprehend the wonders contained in the New Testament," so would you attribute the alleged heterodoxy of men who are at present in your own church, such as Bishop Colenso, the Essayists and Reviewers, &c., who have played such havoc with both the Old and New Testament, to the "inability" of these great and profoundly learned men "to understand and comprehend the wondrous statements" of these sacred books. This is a very old plea in behalf of Christianity. But it is exceedingly odd that no heterodox person, however learned and strong-minded, can understand these ancient records. And still odder it is that men who—as long as they are thought orthodox—are regarded as profoundly erudite, as theologians of the highest grade, and as men of extraordinarily large and grasping minds, are denounced as illiterate blockheads, unable "to understand and comprehend the wondrous statements" of Holy Writ, the moment they are found to have written or spoken against the superstitious notions cherished of the excellence of this collection of ancient literature, composed in benighted and barbarous ages, by ignorant and savage people. This cry, however, will not much longer serve the purpose for which it is raised.

You ask,—"How is it you are not a *Necessitarian*, or a believer in the *doctrine of chance*, instead of a Deist? For the belief in the existence of a God, who is *omnipotent*, is as much surrounded by incomprehensible *difficulties* and *things hard to be understood*, as the Christian creed which you reject, simply from its being *incapable of proof or reason*." On this passage I have to remark that, if you think *the existence of God*, (or the belief in his existence) *is incapable of proof or reason*, you had better turn Atheist as soon as you conveniently can. For it appears to me impossible for you to prove the existence of God from the Bible—one of the most imperfect, contradictory, erroneous, and immoral books ever written,

furnishing a thousand proofs that God had no more to do with producing it than some other book. To imagine an immoral or even imperfect book coming from God, is to imagine an immoral or imperfect God, which appears to *me* an absurdity. Before the Bible could come from God, he must have existed; and before the Bible can prove the existence of God, it must be proved to be a moral, a perfect book—utterly free from the least taint of vice, or the slightest mistake. This cannot be proved, and therefore the Bible cannot be made to prove the existence of God. No writer of any part of the Bible sets about proving the existence of God; nor is there any god spoken of in the Bible, but such as had innumerable imperfections and moral vices, quite unworthy of any rational conception of Deity,—such a god as dwelt between the cherubim, and was kept in a box called the ark. Indeed, no true philosopher of the present day would think of proving the existence of God from the contents of the Bible. As, therefore, you believe that God's existence is "incapable of proof or reason," from anything in nature, it follows that you have no proof at all of his existence, and, consequently, are "without God in the world." To *me*, however, the existence of God appears capable of irrefragable "proof" and cogent "reason." The existence of nature, and the mode in which it exists, fully satisfy my mind of the existence of God. The old saying that "nothing can be produced from nothing," is incontrovertible. Then, I know that *something* exists. I exist. The earth exists; and there are several geological proofs that it has not always existed, and that it has gradually been brought to its present condition. There are also proofs that its present, as well as past condition, involved a design. If you had attentively read my book, against which you inveigh, you would have seen my reasons for being a Deist, instead of "a believer in the doctrine of chance." But I can be a Deist, and yet, consistently, a "Necessitarian," whom you identify with "the doctrine of chance," thus committing not a very slight blunder. What you say about "incomprehensible difficulties, and things hard to be understood in the Christian creed," is of your own creation, not of mine. As I have already stated, I can see nothing incomprehensible about it. I can see in it only absurdity blended with human invention, in most instances easily unravelled and traced to its appropriate source. Your phrase—"God who is omnipotent," is one which, you would say, you derive from the Bible; for you imply that even the existence of God, cannot be proved or argued from nature; much less, of course, can his attributes. But the Bible does not teach that the God of the Jews was omnipotent; on the contrary, it frequently represents him as limited in power as well as knowledge. It states that "he could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron." (Judg. i. 19.) He did not know whether Abraham feared him or not. (Gen. xxii. 12.) He is said to have come down to see the work of the masons at the tower of Babel. (Gen. xi. 5.) Thus does the Bible deny God's omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. And, as to nature, although it furnishes a proof of God's existence, yet the proof of his *mode* of existence, his essence, and his attributes are not so easily adduced from it. For example, when it is granted that God created this world, still the existence of this world is no proof that the creator was

omnipotent, or infinite in power, because this world is positively finite; and since it is an axiom, that the cause needs not be more than adequate to the effect, this world might have been created by a being whose creative power was ten thousand times greater than was required to create this world, and yet that power finite. But I cannot say more on this point without knowing the precise idea you attach to the word, "omnipotent." Perhaps that, like me, you have a very imperfect notion of a being omnipotent, or of anything *infinite*. Such an imperfection is incident to finite beings, such as we are. Our words about *infinity* are so devoid of idea as to be almost empty sounds.

You further demand,—"How do you understand or explain the difficulties which appertain to the being and nature of an *eternal* God?—of one who is the uncaused cause of everything?—of a being who has no relation to space, not being a part here, or a part there, or a whole anywhere? And yet such a being is God!" But, Reverend Sir, how do you know that "such a being is God?" If God is different from matter, (or, if you please, if he is a spirit) how can you have any idea of him, or of his mode of existence? Undoubtedly, like every other man, you obtain all your ideas through the avenues of sense, and have not the slightest notion of anything which you have not acquired through these *media*. Nor is there a single word in your vocabulary—not even in your Bible—that is not the name of the existence, the mode of existence, or the mode of action of something material. You have ideas only of things that you can either see, hear, feel, taste, or smell; which things must needs be material. Such is your constitution, that you can know nothing of God, apart from the material universe. The Bible reveals nothing of God's mode of existence; all that it says of him is applicable to a corporeal or material being. How, then, can you so rashly assert that such as you describe is God? To the string of words that you employ in this description, which are nearly all negative terms, you cannot be able to attach any definite ideas. For instance, what idea can you have of "a being who has no relation to space?" or even of "space" itself?—what is it? What idea can you form of the mode of existence of a being who, you say, is not "a part here, or a part there, or a whole anywhere?" By these negative expressions, you tell me what God is not, instead of what he is; and the very terms you use are those conveying, exclusively, ideas of matter.

> "Man, know thyself, presume not God to scan,
> The proper study for mankind is man."

As for myself, I pretend to no knowledge of God's mode of existence or essence. All I contend for is, that there is evidence in nature of his existence and of his character, showing him to be wise and good, to a degree beyond my comprehension. From the evidence I thus have, I am able to believe in his existence, wisdom, and goodness, without knowing the *mode* of his existence, or how he exists; and, consequently, without believing in this. For I cannot *believe* what I do not *know*. Still, there is a great difference between *knowing* of the existence of a thing, and knowing the *mode* of its existence; and therefore between *believing* in its existence, and in its *mode* of existence. I am daily forced to believe in the *existence* of hundreds of surrounding objects, while, owing to my ignorance of their *mode* of existence, I have no belief in it; since knowledge, either real or supposed, is

the foundation of belief. It would be well if, in theology, men's belief paused where their real knowledge ended.

You next ask—"What think you of a being who is *omniscient*," (and yet) "who cannot know the future actions of men?" My reply is, that I cannot imagine the existence of such a being. Truth is consistent. What you state is a contradiction. Such, however, throughout, is the description given in the Bible of the God of the Jews. But that is not my God. If it were, he would be, in everything, precisely like a fallible, erring, wicked man. You add,—"Or, if his omniscience enables him to know this, what think you of the *contingency* of human actions?—or, if human actions are not contingent, what think you of the *morality* of these actions?—of the distinction, for instance, which exists between vice and virtue—between crime and innocence—sin and duty?" To this, I answer that, to me, there appears no real and inherent "contingency" in human actions. The apparent contingency arises from our imperfect knowledge of the ramified chain of causes and effects by which these actions are brought about. The contingency is in us, not in the actions. In proportion as our knowledge of ourselves, of our fellow beings, and of the surrounding world increases, this contingency diminishes. Of this, we have a thousand proofs. We are now much more able than our ancestors were, five centuries ago, both to trace back human actions to their respective causes, and to calculate accurately upon their future course. When we see a chain of causes and effects producing certain definite actions, analogy teaches us that all actions are governed by the same laws, although we may not be able, in all cases, to trace out all the concurrent causes and effects to the proximate ones, in a long and ramified series. As to the distinction between moral vice and virtue, I must again say that, if you will dispassionately read my book, which you so vehemently curse, you will find my views on these points stated at some length. Doubtless, on these questions, I materially differ from you. I do not, for instance, believe it possible for a man to commit an immoral act by eating an apple, or the fruit of any tree, unless thereby he violate one or more of the laws of nature,—such as the physical, organic, or social laws. It is the infringement of these laws, which are unbending, and which forthwith punish the offender in proportion to his disregard of them, that constitutes man's vice and misery; and it is the observance of them that makes him virtuous and happy. Of this, we have daily proofs, in a thousand cases.

I do not think there is anything more in your letters calling for a reply from me. As to your implied threat, at the close of each letter, that hell awaits me, it will be soon enough for you thus to hold Satanic brimstone under my nose, when you have shown that the Bible, in which you find a picture of this imaginary place of eternal torments, is infallibly true,—is a book given by God to man.

I make no apology for the prolixity of this letter, which, certainly, has been extended much longer than I proposed at the outset; for my aim was to "cry quits," as to my epistolary obligations to you.

I am,

Reverend Sir, yours truly,

E. P. MEREDITH.

Rev. John Fairfax Francklin, M. A.

Vicar of Whaplode, Spalding, Lincolnshire.

Whaplode, Spalding,
6th February, 1866.

SIR,

"Thrice is he armed, who hath his quarrel just."

I therefore, purposely pass over all your personal sneers and bitter invectives, levelled at me, as a Christian minister, as vain, puerile, and utterly beneath my notice, and unworthy a philosopher, such as you pretend to be. Moreover, I feel assured it would be but an idle waste of time on my part, were I to bandy words with such an one as you, who live confessedly for the present world only. In fact, in communicating one with another, we speak in a different language to each other.—You, as a *Pagan*, worship *Nature*, animate and inanimate—stocks and stones, trees and shrubs, and the whole starry host—as *your God*; while *I*, as a *Christian*, worship the *God* who *created Nature*. We cannot, therefore, converse *intelligibly*; and I will not needlessly trouble myself to controvert the miserable fallacies, the wilful misrepresentations, and perverse distortions contained in your verbose epistle. Still, as the tone and tenour of the same seem to challenge a reply of some sort, lest you should suppose your subtle dogmas (I cannot call them arguments) have caused me to succumb to your daring blasphemies,—for blasphemies they assuredly are, if there be any meaning in the word,—I will simply "acknowledge the receipt," and close my correspondence for the present, in as concise a manner as the subject will permit. Do not, for a moment, flatter your self-esteem, and imagine that I fear your power to destroy, or even weaken the bulwarks of the Christian faith, by the feeble efforts *you* have put forth for that mischievous purpose. The Christian knows that "the gates of of hell shall not be able to prevail against it." If, therefore, there were *five hundred powerful MEREDITHS*, instead of *one weak* and *puny* one, engaged in the attack, I should laugh their efforts to scorn. I will, for argument's sake, readily *admit* that you are right in your views and dicta: no slight stretch of imagination on my part; (as you will doubtless allow) and even *then*, I must ask you, infidel as you are, to consider carefully and seriously the following question:—Modern infidels, willfully and advisedly spurn, as inconsistent with their ideas of right and wrong, the contents of the *Bible*, as false and erroneous; and consequently, they repudiate the doctrine of a Mediator between God and man, and a state of future reward and punishment, for the deeds done in the flesh, as set forth therein. But they, nevertheless, allow that all mankind, as they are taught by *nature*, are *creatures* of the *same Creator*; consequently, they are *fellow-creatures one with another*; must not, therefore, all their religious duties, as they are creatures of the *same Creator, and fellow-creatures one with another*, be properly and necessarily the *same*? But how stands the *fact*? Why, their *natural* religion, on which they severally rely for *support*, for *comfort*, for *happiness*, etc. (and to which *you* continually refer, and set forth as the pattern of *excellence*,) either as to its *uniformity* or *universality*, is observable, both in *theory* and in *practice*, to be vastly *unequal*, in its various and several degrees, from *some* very slight and imperfect knowledge and conception of a *creating* God to *no* notion whatever of *any* Creator. Can you *satisfactorily* explain this strange anomaly

in your infidel creed? If not, I must say that modern infidels, in *their* schemes of *morality*, or "*Natural Religion*," as they call it, are *fundamentally* wrong. It is, in fact a body without a head; and for any *conclusive* result in their creed, they must begin their cherished system over again. For, if they trust to it for any *real*, *solid*, and *permanent benefit*, they must lay the *foundation* where a Christian's hope lies; *not here*, but in *another* and a *future* state,—in *faith*, and in *dependance* upon an *omniscient*, *omnipotent*, and *rewarding* Providence, as set forth in *Revelation*; and of which scheme, Christianity is the sole exponent,—the very clearest evolution and the most satisfactory demonstration in the world. You may probably sneer at my question and its deduction, and you are perfectly welcome to do so. But, as I find the notions entertained by Free-thinkers upon religion are so very absurd, and their writings so amazingly contradictory, when compared one with another, I can smile in return. For, as I have already said, they do not require, and scarcely deserve a serious refutation in this enlightened age. For the poison they foolishly administer (to any but the most simple and immoral,) actually carries its own antidote. Perhaps, therefore, the easiest and best way of replying to their repeatedly refuted and now *exploded* vapouring, would be from their *own* various infidel writings. I will, therefore, offer to your notice "*The Unbeliever's Creed*," which you will find in the 9th No. of "The Connoisseur;" and when you have duly studied it, possibly you may adopt it, as according with *some* of your views. It is as follows:—

"I believe in no God (of the Bible), but that matter is God, and God is matter, and that it matters not whether there be any God or no. I believe that the world was *not* made, but that it made *itself*,—that it had no beginning, and that it may, or may not have an end. I believe that man is but a beast; that soul is body, and body is soul, and that, after death, there is neither soul nor body. I believe in no religion, but that *natural* religion is the *only* religion, and that all religion is *unnatural*. I believe not in Moses, nor the Evangelists, nor in the Prophets ("*Nazareth*" included); "but I believe in philosophy,—in the writings of Chubb, Collins, Tolland, Tindall, Morgan, Mandeville, Hobbs, Hume, Voltaire, Diderot, Volney, Paine, and, *especially in Meredith*. But I believe *not* in St. Paul, and Revelation. I believe in Tradition: I believe in Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, in the Talmud, and in the Koran. I believe not in the Bible, but I believe in Confucius: I believe not in Christ, but I believe in Mahomet, and, *lastly*, *I believe in all unbelief! Now*, (if not for ever) Amen."

When your metaphysical and sophistical mind can *disprove* this to be the *general* creed of professed *unbelievers* in Revelation, I shall, perhaps be favoured by a rejoinder. In the meanwhile, since your *self-conceit* comes out more strongly in your private letter to me, than even in your "Book," I shall conclude by observing,—were the *evil* which, as an unbeliever, you *attempt* to perpetrate, *confined to yourself*, I would, as a true Christian, *not* indeed, as you ignorantly suppose, burn you, but I would *pity* you. Since, however, this is not the case, and you endeavour to injure your fellow-creatures with publishing your *faithless* doctrines, I can but reprove your vanity, and say, in the words of St. Paul to Elymas,—

"O full of all subtilty and all mischief! thou child of the Devil! thou enemy of all righteousness! when wilt thou cease to pervert the right way of the Lord?"

I am, Sir, yours in sorrow, not in anger,

JOHN FAIRFAX FRANCKLIN, M. A.

E. P. Meredith, Esq.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
January 25th, 1866.

REVEREND SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th ult., which I must not allow to remain any longer unanswered.

I have to complain that it contains no reply to any portion of my letter which it professes to answer. Almost all its contents are foreign to the points at issue. You cannot have forgotten the origin and state of this correspondence.—You write two letters to me, therein making a series of allegations, or laying down a number of propositions. These, in my reply to you, I take up, one by one. cite them in full, and, I think, fairly refute them. But, in your rejoinder, you make no attempt to cope with my arguments,—do not aim at attacking them, and do not even notice them, any more than if they had not been advanced. Instead of doing this, you write a long chapter about something else, which has no immediate bearing on the points in dispute. Your letter, therefore, is no reply whatever to my previous communication to you, which consisted of answers to questions raised by you yourself, in the most spontaneous manner imaginable. You say nothing against my averment that you were wrong in alleging that I had sent you extracts from my new book—"The Prophet of Nazareth." You do not deny the accuracy of the illustrations I give that, in opprobrious language, you closely resemble "the Author and Finisher of your faith," thus proving yourself a true Christian. You do not defend the impeached soundness of your logic, in maintaining that my silence, as to what you had written against my book, proved one of two things,—either that what you had written was "unanswerable," or that I was "so self-satisfied and so besottedly self-conceited" as to think you beneath my notice. Nor are you so fair as to accede to my request for your authority to "assume the latter to be the cause of" my "silence." Is it not very mortifying for a *man* to be in your position?—to have made a string of immoral charges against me, of whom you knew nothing, and had heard nothing, and, then, to be unable to adduce a single proof to substantiate them? I am well aware that what I now write is decidedly personal; but since you have opened this correspondence with a direct personal attack upon me (doubtless in your ignorance of the etiquette observed by men of letters, in criticising one another's literary productions) I deliberately think I am fully justified in thus endeavouring to make you feel your humiliating state; so that you and other Christians, who, I hope, will take warning from your misfortune, may, in future, be deterred from

defaming others, and calling them by all manner of bad names, when utterly unable to adduce a tittle of evidence in support of your calumnies. If, like the ancient Christians, who had faith in "pious frauds," you believe that it is a virtue in you to make any untrue statements with a view to maintain the credit of Christianity, I beg to assure you that you mistake the means, or, at least, mistake the age to which such means are applicable. You cannot, now, very creditably, do what one of the most illustrious Fathers of Christianity, St. Jerome, (Epist. 50, ad Pammach.) recommends, when, after mentioning the practices of Origen, Methodius, Eusebius, Apollinaris, &c., and, subsequently, stating that St. Paul practised the very same art, he says,—Considerate quibus argumentis, et quam lubricis problematibus diaboli spiritu contexta subvertant; et quia inturdum coguntur loqui, *non quod feriunt, sed quod necesse est, dicunt adversus ea quæ dicunt Gentiles.*" In this age, the standard of the morality of which is much higher than that of either the Fathers, or of the inspired Apostles, such means will neither destroy the works of the devil, nor serve as an argument against a Gentile like me. But to proceed: you have neither condescended to explain what you mean by the word, "blasphemous," which you used, nor deigned to inform me whether you, who teach that God breakfasted with Abraham and wrestled with Jacob, or I, who deny that the Supreme Being performed either of these human actions, is the greater blasphemer. Further, you decline to exorcise the evil spirit, by which, you say, I am possessed, and refuse to tell me what you know of a spirit, either evil or good. You do not explain what you mean by the expression, "humanly speaking;" nor do you grapple with any of the arguments I advanced to show that I have a right to use every rational and moral means, in endeavouring to convince you of the error of your creed. The same may be said of the proofs I gave to show that you were in error, when you alleged that, if Christians believe "in mere fables, they risk nothing and can lose nought." Your silence would indicate that, on this point, you now see the error of your assertion, and wish to say no more about it. Nor have you a word to say in defending Christianity from the numerous charges of having injured humanity, which, in my last letter, I brought against it. After charging me with "inability to understand and comprehend the wondrous statements contained in the New Testament," you refuse to produce a single proof of the truth of your assertion. Neither does your religious zeal prompt you to defend one of your *three* Deities, whom I accused in my last letter also of immorality and absurdity. You have not a word to say on behalf of your Bible which, with numerous illustrations, I have shown to be "one of the most imperfect, contradictory, erroneous, and immoral books ever written, furnishing a thousand proofs that God had no more to do with producing it than some other book." After asserting that the existence of God was "incapable of proof or reason," and after receiving from me clear and undeniable proof of his existence, deduced from nature, you offer no objection to the validity of these proofs. You appear tacitly to admit that the Bible denies "God's omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence." I asked for the precise idea you attach to the word, "omnipotence." You have refused to oblige me. I further asked you how you knew that such a

being as you described was God, and whether you had any idea whatever of a spirit; but you give no answer. In short, you do not refer to any of the numerous predicates, which you gratuitously laid down for discussion, in your two first letters, and to which, *seriatim*, I replied in my last letter. I would deferentially submit, that it was with these replies to your own positions, you should have dealt in your last epistle. Otherwise, of what use was it for you to court discussion of the subjects you advanced? In your last letter, however, while you evade and ignore all these, you launch out into other matters. With these matters, therefore, you compel me now to deal.

You begin your last letter by stating that you pass over all my personal sneers and bitter invectives, levelled at you as a Christian minister, as vain, puerile, and utterly beneath your notice, &c. Now, I do not know what portion of my former letter you construe into "personal sneers and bitter invectives," unless, it is that wherein I say that the opprobrious language used in your two epistles, proves you to be a true Christian and a close imitator of the Author of your faith. Could I see that I have been more personal than the tenour of your letters compelled me to be, I would readily apologise. But you should recollect, that your two first letters are concatenated chains of personalities, and that "those who live in glass houses, should not throw stones."

You write,—"I feel assured it would be but an idle waste of time, on my part, were I to bandy words with *such an one as you*, who live confessedly for the present world only; in fact, in communicating, one with another, we speak in a different language to each other: *you*, as a *Pagan*, worship *Nature*, animate and inanimate, stocks and stones, trees and shrubs, and the whole starry host, as *your God*, while *I*, as a *Christian*, worship the *God* who *created Nature*!" But how was it that you did not discover the inutility of bandying words with me, before you addressed to me two pressing epistles, in effect commanding me to enter into a discussion with you, concerning Christianity? Had you not ample opportunity of perceiving this, in reading my book, and particularly the "Extracts" from it, which appear principally to have moved you with holy indignation to write to me on the matter? It is too late for you to back out, now that you have entered the arena;—you have thrown down the gauntlet, and you must now polemically fight, or openly admit that you cannot defend your Christianity. I cannot allow you to sneak out, under any pretence whatever. I candidly admit, however, that you have not, as yet, shown yourself one of the ablest, champions of the Christian faith that could be found in the world, and that your fellow-Christians have every reason to fear that their creed will suffer in your hands. But I cannot help this; you have come forward, as the champion of Christianity, of your own accord—prompted, apparently, only by the fiery zeal of your pious soul—and have thrown down the *manica ferrea*. You will recollect how angry you were with me for my delay in entering into this controversy. All I can allow you, at this stage of the affair, is the liberty of providing a substitute to fight this Christian battle, if you are so humble as to think that a better combatant than your worthy self can be found. At all events, the engagement must proceed,—we must decide where the

truth lies. The means for this decision, or the ammunition in this war, must, however, not be the rack, the thumbscrew, the dungeon, the fagot, the fire, and the sword of ancient Christians, but facts and arguments. It is high time that it should be a settled point whether a religion which is so costly as Christianity is to this country, is, or is not of a Divine origin,—whether it is, or is not, in origin, anything superior to Mahomedanism, Boodhism, Brachminism, Magianism, or any of the other religions, —most of them much older than Christianity—which claim Divine origin. In the meantime, let me ask you for your proof that I "live *confessedly* for the present world only." Where, or when have I made this confession?

I must further ask you for your proof that I, "as a *Pagan*, worship *Nature*, stocks and stones, and the whole starry host, as" my "God" while you, "as a Christian, worship the *God who created Nature*." It is a very easy matter to show that this allegation is diametrically opposed to the truth, and that the fact is exactly the reverse of your reckless statement, —that it is the Christians are those who worship false or imaginary gods, while Deists adore the Creator of the universe. The most effectual way, perhaps, of shewing the fallacy of your statement as to the God I personally worship, would be to cite a few sentences from the Book wherein, apparently, you imagine, you have found that I am an idolator.— "Nature, all whose works proclaim but one God, neither demands nor suggests for her Creator such irrational worship. She points out only one God of absolute unity, to whom to pay homage and adoration,—one Deity whose glory fills the universe, and whose presence pervades unbounded space!—one infinite intelligent First Cause, whose existence and attributes are much more clearly taught in his works than in a Hebrew Bible,—much more intelligibly and positively than by a thousand visions and dreams alleged to have been given to barbarous patriarchs and fanatic prophets."—"Cast thine eyes about thee, look at the surrounding world revealing the existence, the wisdom, the glory, the goodness of thy Creator! Open the *Book of Nature*, and read therein! Here wilt thou find and learn everything thou canst want or wish to know. Here canst thou contemplate the power, wisdom, and benignity—not of three Gods in one, but of one true Deity, and learn to love, adore, and glorify him!" (The Prophet of Nazareth, pp. 583, 585.) Who but such a zealous Christian as the Vicar of Whaplode, would think of asserting that the author of these expressions, and of hundreds of others similar, in the same work, was a pagan, worshipping nature, and the starry host of heaven as his God?

But, Rev. Sir, let us see what sort of a God, you, in common with other Christians, worship, according to the description given of him in your Bible, whence, as you contend, you derive all the knowledge you possess of him. We shall thereby be able clearly to see who it is that worship stocks and stones, trees and shrubs, and the whole starry host as their God. It is true that, in different parts of the Jewish mythology, which has descended to us, under the name of Old Testament, there are advanced different and very contradictory notions of God, varying according to the different intellectual capacities and tastes of the different com-

pilers of this collection of ancient lore, and according to the prevailing notions of the age and country in which they individually and respectively lived. Although the views of Deity entertained by the Jews, were always coarse, low, and unworthy, yet, perhaps, in no other part of their books are their views of him more grovelling than in their early history. The God of Abraham appears to have been a family God, whom Abraham, from some motive, had chosen, dissenting in this important particular from his father and grand-father, who, as we are expressly told, "worshipped other gods." (Josh. xxiv. 2.) The God of Abraham, as well as that of his father, wife, and nephew Lot, before this family emigrated from Chaldea to Canaan, was *fire*. We are told they came "from UR of the Chaldees;" (Gen. xi. 31.) that is from the fire-worship of the Chaldees,—a people whose religion, undoubtedly, was *fire-worship*. The word UR, means *fire*, or *light*, and here indicates the name of a city, very appropriately designated from the great light of the fire-worship carried on therein. The word is also frequently, in the Hebrew writings, applied to sun-worship, from which apparently emanated fire-worship, being thought a fit representation of the sun, supposed to be a body of fire. In its plural form, you will find the word designating the *Urim* of the high-priest, a kind of talismanic idol, consulted and adored by the Hebrews. In a modified form, it is used for the sun, and is, doubtless, of a cognate origin with *Orus*, (Apollo) the name of an Egyptian idol which represented the sun. Abraham, being a fire-worshipper before he left Chaldea, appears to have adhered to the same God in Canaan; for we find (Gen. xv. 17.) that the first glimpse he had of his deity, was as "a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp," or, more properly translated,—a smoking furnace, and a pillar of fire. Such was Abraham's God; and as you claim the same God as Abraham worshipped, such, Sir, must be your God. But though Abraham was a fire-worshipper, yet his god was a distinct deity from the god of his brother, and that of his father; for we read (Gen. xxxi. 53.) that, in the covenant which Jacob and Laban made, the god of Abraham, the god of Nahor, and also the god of their father, Terah, were to be the judges between them, showing that these three renowned persons had a god each. In the same chapter we read of Laban,—who was a near relative of Abraham, and whose sister the Father of the faithful had selected as a wife for his son Isaac,—pursuing Jacob for stealing his gods, the real thief, however, being Jacob's wife, These gods were such as could be hidden "in the camels' furniture." They were called *Teraphim* and *Aleim*, (gods,) and there is every reason to infer from the narrative that they were the gods which this patriarchal family, the immediate descendants of Abraham, worshipped. We find *Teraphim* in great renown, and as general objects of worship and consultation, at a later date, among, at least, one tribe of the Hebrews, (Jud. xvii. xviii.) The mother of a man named Micah dedicates eleven hundred shekels of silver unto Jehovah, to make a graven image, a molten image, and *Teraphim*. For a priest to officiate in the worship of these Jewish gods, there was a Levite. Like the *Urim* and *Thummim*, and other idols, they were consulted in regard to the future. A band of marauding Israelites, one day, however, came to Micah's house, under pretence of asking counsel of his gods, and stole both the gods and their priest! A

large number of people from the neighbourhood, who were attached to these gods, went in pursuit of the thieves; but they failed to recover the stolen gods. These gods were afterwards set up in the city of Dan, under the care of a regular sacerdotal staff, where they remained all the time that the house of the gods (Aleim) was in Shiloh, where the ark and tabernacle were kept, "until the day of the captivity of the land." The narrator of this idol-worship speaks of it in no disapproving tone. Indeed, the prophet Hosea (iii. 4.) speaks of images and teraphim as being constantly employed in the worship of Jehovah, and as indispensable to it. The loss of these he regards as a national punishment or curse. As a *judgment* which was to come upon his nation, he fortels that the children of Israel should abide many days "without a sacrifice, and without an *image*, and without an ephod, and without *teraphim*;" clearly implying that images were constantly used in Jewish worship, and that the deprivation of them was thought a national calamity.

The whole of the Old Testament plainly shows that the Jews, like other nations were polytheists and idolators. The Mosaic records never assert that Jehovah was the *only* God; but, on the contrary, they contain many implied admissions of the power of rival Deities. All that they claim for Jehovah is superiority over other Gods.—"Who is like unto thee, Jehovah, among the gods?" Ex. xv. 11.) The very name of the Hebrew God is the name of a pagan idol, belonging to nations, doubtless, much older than the seed of Abraham. *Yahou*, *Iaho*, or *Yahouh*, rendered *Iahouah*, and *Iah*, in the Hebrew mythology, and into English, *Jehovah*, was the name of an idol worshipped alike by the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Chaldeans, and Persians. Abraham was confessedly a Chaldean; Moses, on the very face of the Jewish record, was an Egyptian priest; and there can be nothing clearer than that the Jehovah or *Iehouh* (יהוה) which was worshipped by the Jews, and is still worshipped by Christians, was as much of an idol as any of the residential gods of Egypt, Philistia, Zidon, or any other place. But, unlike the Gods of the great neighbouring nations, Jehovah had no house wherein to dwell, till comparatively a late period of the Jewish history. The Philistines had a temple for Dagon long before one was built for Jehovah, who, previously to the erection of Solomon's temple, is continually represented in the Bible as residing on the lid of the ark, called the mercy-seat, between the cherubim, with a luminous glory about him, ready, on all occasions, to be consulted by the people, and, by a contrivance of the priests, to give answers in an audible voice. Thus was the Israelitish God, or rather idol, *fixed* between the cherubim (which also were idols,) on the ark. This ark was a box, coffer, or chest, the lid of which appears to have been the mercy-seat. It was kept in the sanctuary, under the care of the high priest. (Exod. xxv. 19—22. Num. vii, 89. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 2. 2 Kings xix. 15, I Chron. xiii. 6. Psal. lxxx, 1. Isa. xxxvii. 16.) When the Israelites travelled from one place to another, their idols were carried on this box, agreeably to the customs of the normades of Arabia, and of the Canaanites. Accordingly, there was an ancient tradition among the Jews, that, when they were normades or wanderers in the desert of Arabia Petrea, they carried with them a box containing the image of a god named Rephan,

Act. vii. 43) a sort of a star, cut in wood, representing one of the heavenly bodies, traces of the worship of which star are found in some of the Prophets.

Not only did these holy Israelites worship the idols on or in this box, or ark, but they, apparently, worshipped the box itself. That illustrious field-marshal, Joshua, "fell to the earth on his face before" it, in an act of profound adoration. But as he addressed Jehovah by name, it may be rationally maintained that his object of worship was the idol which was, at the time, in or on the box. (Jos. vii. 6.) This box, however, was omnipotent, both for good and for evil. It miraculously killed its thousands, and saved the lives of as many. (Jos. iii. iv. 1 Sam. v. vi.) When it was brought into the presence of a rival idol, called Dagon, the latter fell on its face before the Jewish box. The Philistines stole this box from the Israelites, whose priests, people, and all, were thereupon thrown into the greatest consternation. They gave up their god for lost! The glory had departed from Israel! The enemy had stolen their god! But the Philistines, finding this box a dangerous thing to be retained, sent it back, accompanied with several other idols, in the shape of golden emerods, and golden mice, which the Israelitish priests gladly received with their god. (1 Sam. vi.) In their encampments, the Hebrews kept this coffer-god in the tabernacle, which was a kind of portable shrine, such as Moloch and other idols had, (Vid. Herodot. Euterp. 63. Hom. Il. i. 420. Diodor. Sic. lib. i,) until Solomon, when his people had settled down in Canaan, built for this deity a temple, in imitation of the neighbouring nations. When David proposed to build a house for the Jewish idol to dwell therein, instead of dwelling within the curtains of the tabernacle, this God is pretended to have asked, why they should now build a house for him, as he had not dwelt in a house since the Israelites had left Egypt, but had walked in a tent, and in a tabernacle. (2 Sam. vii.) A house, or temple, however, was built, and the god, the cherubim, the box, and all the idolatrous apparatus, were removed into it; so that the Jewish idol, as heretofore, dwelt "between the cherubim."

As dwelling between these cherubim, and, therefore, as confined to the tabernacle, and afterwards to the temple, like the idols of the surrounding idolatrous nations, we find this God continually addressed by his worshippers. The pious king, Hezekiah begins his prayer to him thus:—"O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubim!" Other instances are found in the passages already quoted. But what were these cherubim? Whimsical and monstrous idols, whose very names, Aben-Ezra tells us, in the Syriac language, signify *images*; each having four wings and four faces,—the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle. All Christians writers go so far, as even to admit "that the cherubims were emblems of Jehovah." But it is clear that the Hebrews, like all other nations, worshipped their cherubim as gods. The Jewish cherubim were regarded as gods, and called gods by the neighbouring nations. When the ark, with the cherubim, had come into the Israelitish camp, the Philistines cried in terror,—"Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? these are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the

wilderness." (1 Sam. iv. 6—8.) In similar language did the men of Beth-shemesh exclaim. (1 Sam. vi. 20.) Idols identical with these cherubim, were worshipped by a great number of ancient nations, some of them much older than the Hebrews. The *Chemim* of the Indians had five heads each,—the head of a lion, of an eagle, of a stag, of a dog, and of a serpent. The Egyptian idol, *Serapis*, had the head of a dog, of a wolf, and of a lion; and its name, like that of the Jewish cherubim, implies the idea of light or fire. The Roman idol, *Diana*, had wings and three heads, —the head of a man, of a horse, and of a dog. The Persian god, *Mithras*, had four wings and three faces. The Indian god, *Gryphin*, had immense wings and several heads. A great many other monster idols of the same sort could be named. The Jewish images, called *seraphim* were similar. Some of them had six wings, and several faces. Their name implies, like that of the *cherubim* and the *urim*, the idea of light or fire: (Isa. vi. 3. lix. 2; lxiv. 7. Ezek. 1, 10.) and indeed, numerous are the passages in the Bible which describe the breath, nostrils, and mouth of Jehovah, as emitting fire or smoke; such as,—"His tongue, as a devouring fire, and his breath as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck,"—"The lighting down of his arms with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire,"—"With the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered,"—"There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it,"—"These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day,"—"Whom the Lord shall consume with the *breath* of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming,"—"O God, why doth thine anger smoke?"—"The anger of the Lord shall smoke;"—passages, all of which emphatically apply to Moloch, or any such fire-god, through whose mouth and nostrils issued smoke and fire.

This reminds us that the polytheistic Hebrews, from the earliest period of which we have any account of them, were fire-worshippers and sun-worshippers, like almost all the other nations of antiquity. That they worshipped their *Iehovah Aleim* and their *Adonim*, both as fire and as the sun, there are numerous proofs in the Bible, which speaks of this idolatry in an approving tone. Fire was the very essence—the very life and soul of the Jewish idol which, we have seen, dwelt, or, as expressed in some places, *sat* between the cherubim, and manifested its divinity in a display of fire. The ancient fire-worshippers had many idols which continuously emitted fire. Such was Moloch, an idol made of brass, just as the Jewish brazen altar was made, with the head of a calf or ox—the animal emblem of fire,—like one of the heads of the Jewish cherubim; like the head of the brazen-footed bull, which breathed out fire, and guarded Jason's golden fleece; like the heads of the flaming cherubim of Eden, placed in a *tabernacle*; like the heads of Jeroboam's bovine idols; and like the head of Solomon's Moloch, which, with a brazen altar, he erected in the temple, and which was frequently worshipped by the Jews. These people identified their Jehovah with Moloch. Isaiah, (xxx. 27—33) in his description of the rites of Tophet, says that Tophet was ordained of old for the king, (*moloch*) and that the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of brimstone, kindled it. Doubtless, the Jews, like other idolators, kept their idol on the

altar, which, among the Gentiles, was generally the foot-stool of the image, so that the latter was placed on the former. (Austin. Hom. vi. verb. *Domini*,) Some, however, had the images of their deities on high, over the altars, smoking, spitting fire, and emitting such a glare of light, as to be seen at a great distance. Such were the *Chemonim*—images of the gods *Bolim* or *Balim*—rendered into English *Baal*, because of their original identity with *Aleim*—mentioned in Lev. xxvi. 30. 2 Chron. xxxiv. x. 7. Isa. xvii. 8; xxvii. 9. Ezek. vi. 4. 5. We are told that these images "were on high, above" the altars. Those of Baal, a fire-god, representing the sun, were of the bovine shape, made of brass, so as to burn within them, among other things, the bodies of children. If the Jewish idol be regarded as thus fixed over the altar, many passages in the Bible, otherwise obscure, become quite intelligible. Austin, already cited, tells us that the Gentiles placed their images *upon* the altar. Now, we have direct evidence that the Jews kept *fire* between the Cherubim. Ezekiel, (i. x.) who gives the best description of these images, speaks of *fire* infolding itself, and emitting brightness of the colour of amber, while the figures he describes appeared like burning coals of *fire*, and like lamps going up and down, and the *fire* was bright, issuing forth lightening. He further tells us that there was *fire* between the Cherubim he describes; that a certain personage took some of this *fire* in his hand; that the cloud filled the inner court; that the *glory* of Jehovah, of which more anon, went up from the cherub; that the court was full of the *brightness* of the Lord's *glory*; that, presently, the *glory* of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.—An excellent description of genuine fire-worship, the real *object* of worship being shining, dazzling, glaring, glareous, glorious light. The *fire* that gave this *glorious light* was the Jewish Jehovah, which dwelt between the cherubim. This is further proved by the column of *fire* and smoke which guided the Jews, during their wanderings in the wilderness, regulated their movements, and is called the Divine presence, the Shechinah, the glory of the Lord, and so on. The ark, with the *fire* that was between its cherubim, was always carried before them; its *fire* was continually kept up by the priests, so as to be visible to this marauding host; and they followed this *fire* in their marches, believing it to be their God conducting them. When the ark stopped, they stopped; when it moved forward, they moved in the same direction. (Ex. xiii. 21. Num. ix. 15—23; x. 34—36.) The practice of being thus led by their deities, in their journeys as well as battles, was very common among the heathens. Their images, being enshrined in small temples of wood, were carried about by the priests, who made them issue forth fire and clouds of smoke, as signals to their followers. (Macrob. Sat. lib. ii. c. 23.) To this custom the Jewish prophet, Amos, appears to refer, when he tells his countrymen that they had carried about the tabernacle of their Moloch.

Your Sacred Books, Sir, are replete with phrases used in fire-worship, and with narrations of the appearance of a fire-god. It was as a flame of *fire* that the Jewish Deity first appeared to Moses. It was as *fire* he gave the law on mount Sinai. It was the God that answered as *fire*, was to be the true God, in the contest held between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. It was as *fire* the same God answered his servant David. The altar of

incense displayed this *fire*. The same *fire*, with incense—a perfume used by heathens in their worship—was carried by the priests in their censers; and this *fire*, once, miraculously killed some of them. The *Urim* and *Thummim*, by which the Jewish oracle was consulted,—much as their meaning has been twisted by interested commentators,—really signify *fire* and *destruction*,—the *burnings* and *consumings*, if we pluralise them. All the burnt-offerings of the Jews, like those of other nations, originated in fire-worship, the worshippers supposing that the god of *fire* devoured their sacrifices, as food, whether vegetable or animal, human or beastial. In "a chariot of *fire*, and horses of *fire*," precisely like the heathen chariot and horses of the sun, Elijah went up to heaven. We are told that Jehovah went before the Jews "as a consuming *fire*;" and we are assured, not only by the Jew, that his Jehovah Aleim is "a consuming *fire*," even a jealous God," (or, as some translate the latter expression, the burning God—הוא אל קנא,) but also by the Christian, that his *Theos*, or *Zeus*, *(Ioue, Iove, Jove, Jupiter, &c.)* "is a consuming fire." We find that the sacred fire of Jehovah was in Zion, as well as in the temple of Vesta, or of Minerva; (Isa. xxxi. 9.) and, as a still more remarkable proof of the identity of the Jewish fire-worship with that of the Gentiles, we find that the fire of Jehovah, on the brazen altar, was to be kept always burning,—was never to be allowed to go out:—"The *fire* shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." (Lev. vi. 13.) Precisely in like manner was the sacred *fire* kept burning in the temple of Diana, among the Persians. The Magi of Persia and Chaldea had the care of preserving this holy *fire*. In the temple of Ceres, and of Apollo, the sacred *fire* was always kept burning. The preservation of the fire in the temple of Minerva was entrusted to a number of young women, just as the Vestal Virgins were charged with the preservation of the sacred fire in the temple of Vesta, under penalty of death, if they allowed this precious fire to be extinguished. The custom of preserving the sacred fire is much older than the Hebrew mythology. Diodorus Siculus tells us that it was derived by the Romans from the Greeks, and by them from the Egyptians. There is very little doubt that it is nearly as old as sun-worship, and that fire, when worshipped, was originally regarded as an emblem of the Solar Deity. All the ancients imagined this god to be a body of fire. By all his worshippers, he was considered to have existed from eternity, and to have created, not only all other luminous bodies, but the whole universe. He was thought to be the "father of lights," and to have all other luminaries, such as the moon, stars, and so on, under his control and guidance. As a Creator, he was called *Helios Demiourgos,—the Sun, Creator*, or *Solar Creator*. In the Psalms, as well as in other parts of the Bible, the creation and goverment of the world, are attributed to the Solar Deity in a vast number of instances, which you will find in the sequel. (Vid. Vossius, de Orig. et Prog. Idol. lib. ii. c. 5. Bochart. Canaan, lib. ii. c. 5.) As Governor of the celestial bodies, thought by the ancients inferior gods, the Helio-deity of the Bible is continually called "God of hosts,"—"Lord of hosts,"—"Lord God of hosts," &c. (*Iehovah Tsabaoth, Alei Tsabaoth, &c.*) Wherever the *God of hosts* is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, there can be no room for doubt that the writer meant

the Sun. We often read of the *light*, *glory*, and *shining* of the "God of host;" such as—"O Lord God of host, cause thy face to shine." (Psal. xxx.) More instances of this kind will be furnished to you anon.

In the meantime, permit me to remind you that the God of the Hebrews—who, in common with other ancient nations, at some remote period, adored the sun,—was a consuming *fire*, and made all his apparitions as *fire*, even in the cloven tongues of Apostolic times; *fire*, as already intimated, being an emblem of the sun. The vast number of sun-worshipping expressions which occur in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, clearly show that the originators of these expressions regarded the sun as a deity; such as,—"*light* of thy countenance—send out thy *light*—thou coverest thyself with *light*—*light* of the Gentiles—thy *light* is come, and the *glory* of the Lord is risen upon thee,—the Lord shall *rise* upon thee, and his *glory* shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy *light*, and kings to the *brightness* of thy *rising*—ye are the *light* of the world—children of *light*—the life was the *light* of men—he was the true *light*—burning and shining *light*—I am the *light* of the world—*light* of the Gospel—Christ shall give thee *light*—God is *light*—the *light* of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his *fire* shall not thrive; the *light* shall be dark in his tabernacle—Is there a number of his *armies*? and upon whom doth not his *light* arise? the noise of his (God's or the sun's) *tabernacle*—he spreadeth his *light* upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea—the Lord is my *light*—the *light* of Israel shall be for a *fire*, and his Holy One for a *flame*—the Lord shall be to thee an everlasting *light*—walk in the *light of the Lord*—in thy *light* shall we see *light*—then shall thy *light* break forth—then shall thy *light* rise—the Father of *lights*, with whom there is no variableness, neither *shadow* of *turning*—*tabernacle* for the *sun*—the *sun* hath *looked* upon me—one *glory* of the sun, and another *glory* of the moon—horses given to the *sun*, chariots of the *sun*," &c., &c.

The word *glory*, which is applied to the God of the Jews so frequently in the Bible, shows the identity of their fire and sun-worship with that of other idolators. It literally means, *splendour*, *lustre*, *brightness*, such as the sun creates, and admirably bespeaks its origin, in the circle of the sun's rays, which surrounds the heads of saints, and particularly the head of Christ, in pictures, exactly such as the ancients had around Apollo's head representing the sun, and such as the Hindoos had surrounding the heads of several of their gods. The word from which it is translated, in the Hebrew, most frequently, as you must well know, is, כבוד,—*chabod*, meaning *splendour*, *brightness*, *irradiation of light*, &c. Doubtless, you are well aware that lexicographers say that the Latin word *gloria*, whence the English, *glory*, is from the more ancient Latin word, *claro*, *or clarus*, and that this, again, is derived from the Greek, *kleros*, or *glauros*—all signifying *brightness*, *lustre*, &c., such as the sun affords. Nor can you fail to know the connection in which these words are used by profane writers—both Greek and Roman—in allusion to fire-worship and sun-worship. Let me, therefore, remind you that we find, also, in the Bible, such expressions as these:—"The *glory* is departed from Israel, for the ark of the Lord is taken."—"The cherubim of *glory*."—"The Lord will create upon every dwelling, the *shining* of a flaming fire; for upon the *glory* shall be a defence,

and there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow."—"The heavens declare the *glory* of God."—"The king of *glory* shall come in—the Lord of hosts, he is the king of *glory*."—"Hath a nation changed their gods?—my people have changed their *glory*."—"A wall of *fire*, and the *glory* in the midst of her."—"The *glory* of the God of Israel was there."—"The *glory* of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub."—"The *glory* of the God of Israel came from the way of the east, and the earth *shined* with his *glory*."—"Under his *glory* he shall kindle a *burning*, like the *burning* of a *fire*."—"Arise, *shine*, for thy *light* is come, and the *glory* of the Lord is *risen* upon thee."—"God came from Teman,—his *glory* covered the heavens,—his *brightness* was as the *light*."—"The tabernacle shall be sanctified by my *glory*."—"While my *glory* passeth, I will put thee in a cleft of the rock."—"The *glory* of the Lord abode on mount Sinai."—"The *glory* of the Lord appeared in the clouds."—"The *glory* of the Lord was like *devouring fire*."—"The *glory* of the Lord filled the tabernacle."—"The appearance of the likeness of the *glory* of the Lord."—"The *glory* of the Lord stood there."—"The *brightness* of the Lord's *glory*."—"The *glory* of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim."—"The Lord make his face *shine* upon thee."—"Make thy face to shine upon thy servant."—"O God of hosts! cause thy face to *shine*."—"The Lord *shined* forth from mount Paran."—"Out of Zion, God hath *shined*."—"The *sun* of righteousness, with healing in its wings."—"Then spake Joshua to the *Lord*, and said, *Sun*, stand thou still; and the sun stood still in the midst of heaven" The last cited passage, like many others, clearly shows that the Israelites considered the *Sun* one and the same with Jehovah, and that it was the *Sun* they really worshipped, under the title Jehovah, as well as *Adonim*, &c. For, here, it is positively said that Joshua addressed Jehovah by the name, *Sun*, telling him to stand still.

All the foregoing sun and fire-worshipping expressions, in the last paragraph, are from the Old Testament; but, in addition to those already given, there are many more of the same import to be found in the New Testament; such as—"*Light* of the Gentiles, and the *glory* of thy people Israel."—"Two men, who appeared in *glory*."—"The *glory* which I have had with thee."—I could not see for the *glory* of *light*."—"The God of *glory*."—the *light* of the knowledge of the *glory* of God."—"The temple filled with smoke from the *glory* of God."—"The city had no need of the *sun*, for the *glory* of God did *lighten* it." [Here is the glory of the Christian God substituted for the sun, showing the idea entertained of both to be one and the same,] "His *glory* as the *glory* of the only begotten."—"The earth was *lightened* with his *glory*."—"The *glory* of the Lord *shone* round about," &c., &c.

I submit the whole of the foregoing passages to your candid, serious, and critical examination, in order that I may know of you, whether they do not strongly savour of the language of sun-worshippers. It would be well for you, also, in order to see how far you yourself are an idolator, to consider whether the Greek name for the sun, *Helios*, is not of a cognate origin with the Hebrew name for God,—*El* or *Al*; or rather Gods—*Aleim*, or *Eli*. For we find that the word *El*, in the Hebrew, as a verb, means *to shine, glitter, irradiate*; and, as a noun, signifies *splendour, irradiation, glory*,

&c.,—that it is the root of the Hebrew name for the Book of Psalms, which abounds in phrases of sun-worship,—that it occurs in all the sun-worshipping passages just cited,—that it is in the word *hallelujah*, or praise ye the Lord, (*elle-lu-Ie*—render splendour to *Jah, Ia*, or *Yahou*), at the beginning and end of a great number of the Hebrew Psalms,—that it is at the beginning and end of the much older Psalms or hymns of the heathens, identically the same, such as the hymns in honour of Apollo, or the sun, (Ελελευ Ιη),—that Abraham, Isaiah, and other Bible worthies called their God *Al*,—that a great many heathen nations had, for their God, the same name as that by which the Phœnician and Syrian sun-worshippers called their god Saturn (*El*),—that the Canaanites had a temple for their God *Al* —that *Al* and *Aleim*, are words used for God, in the Bible, identically with the heavenly bodies, or, at least, the sun, to describe him as being "in the height of heaven," and as walking "in the circuit of heaven,"—that the heathens worshipped the sun and other celestial bodies, under the name *Al* and *Aleim*,—that the term used for heaven, by the Hebrews, was, by the Chaldeans, used for the sun, which they worshipped,—that the Hebrew word *shemim*, and the Chaldee *shemia*, which literally mean the *heavens*, are frequently used to denote the Gods, as, "Thou shalt have known the *heavens* do rule,—that the Jewish deity is emphatically called the *heaven*, (Lev. xxiv. 16.)—and that the prophet Malachi uses the Chaldee word, *Shemosh*, the name of the sun, in connection with righteousness, &c., when he should have known that the ancient Indian idols, after the form of his own cherubim, were pronounced and called *Shemes* or *Shemens*, the name of his God.

You are further requested to consider whether the peculiar and appropriate name of the Jewish idol, *Iah*, or *Iehovah*, is not identically the same with one of the principal names of Apollo, the sun. We have already seen that, just as we meet with the words, *Elle-lu-Ie*—praise ye *Ie*—יה (rendered it English, *Jah*, while, in some instances, the phrase is altogether omitted), at the beginning and end of a great number of Hebrew Psalms, so, we find, at the beginning and end of the heathen Psalms, in praise of Apollo, the words ελελευ Ιη—praise ye Iη, or *hallelujah*. Now, Iη is a well known name by which Apollo, the god of light, was invoked. This, with the short instead of the long Greek ε, (H) was the name inscribed over the principal entrance into Apollo's temple, at Delphi, in remote times, according to the manner of many eastern nations, from right to left,—ει, but afterwards from left to right—ιε, (Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xi. c. 11. Plutarch. lib. ii. &c.) In Celtic mythology, the same name is of frequent occurrence (spelt *Hu*, and pronounced *Hee*), as the name of the Helio-deity, Apollo, who, unquestionably, at some remote period, was the principal god of the Celtic nation, in dialects of whose language, the word, *Hu-an*, to this day, signifies the sun. Nor is it into few Greek words, signifying things religious, that this ancient title of Apollo —Ιε, or Iη—has entered, owing to the fact that the sun was one of the most ancient deities, and the most generally worshipped, of all of which we have any account. We find this word in Ιερευς—a *priest*, and in upwards of sixty Greek words besides,—all having the root Iε, and denoting something connected with the worship of the gods. The same root—Iε or Iη,

forms the compound word, Ιησους, *Jesus*—Ιη, Apollo, the sun, and σως, health, preservation—the god of health, the Saviour, as Apollo was called. Now, with this word, Ιε, or Ιη, the Hebrew, יה—*Ie* or *Yeh*, in English turned into *Jah*—exactly corresponds, not only in sound, but also in application; as, for example, Ie (Jah) "is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation." (Ex. xv. 2.)—"Extol him that rideth upon the heavens, by his name *Ie*," (Jah.) (Psal. lxviii. 4.) Who but the solar deity can be meant by "him that rideth upon the heavens?" (See the beginning and end of Psal. cxiii; cxiv; cxvii; and from Psal. cxlvi, to the end of the Psalms, where *Ie* occurs.) The very name, *Jews*, in Hebrew (*Ieoudim*), means the devotees of *Ie* or *Iehouh*, (Jehovah) composed of *Ie* and *idah* or *udah*. Even admitting that the Jews derived their name from their patriarch, *Judah*, still, their patronymic signifies precisely the same thing. The writer of Genesis, (xxxix. 35; lxix. 8.) well aware of the meaning of the term, makes Judah's mother at his birth, say,—"Now, I will confess *Iehouh*; (Jehovah) therefore she called his name *Ie-hudah*" (Judah). He also, makes Judah's father, at his death say,—"Thou art *Ie-hudah*; thy bretheren shall bow down (*iudouk*—confess) before thee." The name יהוה, is only a reduplicate, or repetition of יה the ו, (*ou*) according to a well known rule in the Hebrew, having been substituted for י (*i*.) And not unfrequently do we meet with the name in its purely reduplicated form—יהוה (*Ie-Ie*.) Well, then, "*Ie!*" and "*Ie-Ie!*" are well known exclamations of joy, and, sometimes, of lamentation, in the Hebrew, just as the Greek, Ιη! (*Ie*) or Ιη! Ιη! is an expression of joy or grief; such as,—"Huzza!"—"Alas!"—"O Lord!"—"Thank God!" &c. But it is most remarkable that—especially at such an early period as that from which the Orphic hymns are fairly entitled to date, when, unquestionably, none of the present Jewish Scriptures existed—the very name of the Jewish God, *Ie-Ie*, or *Ie-Iou*, should have been used by the devotees of Apollo, in invoking their idol,—Ιη! Ιη! (See Dickenson's Phœnicizantes, c. x.) It behoves you rationally to account for these various points of identity in the name of your Jehovah with that of Apollo, and also in the manner of worshipping these two supposed distinct Gods; not forgetting the words,—Ελελευ Ιε, which are at the beginning and end of psalms of praise, alike, to both divinities; while, at the same time, you bear in mind, that the worship of the sun, or Apollo, was almost universally established, many hundreds, if not thousands of years, before the time of King David, to whom you impute the authorship of your Hebrew psalms. In dealing with these questions, you must further remember that the ancient Greeks addressed their gods, "*Iou, Iou*,"—that the Phœnicians, Etruscans, and other ancient nations, as well as the Hebrews, had gods called *Iao* or *Iahou* (Diodor. Sic. lib. i. Voss. de Orig. Idol. lib. ii. c. 14.),—that Varro says the god of the Jews was *Iove*, that is, *Jove*, whence we have *Iuve, Jovis, Jovis-pater* (Jove the Father), and, at last, *Jupiter* (the father of the gods)—names, all of which, if we make only very slight allowance for dialectic variations, bear a striking likeness to the Hebrew *Iahou, Iehou, Iehoveh, Jehove, or Jove*,—and lastly that, as Ιε, or Ιη, the helio-deity, Apollo, was changed from being—as he was in very remote times—the Father and Creator of all, to be the Son of Jove or Jupiter, the

Father, just as Ἰησους was shortly after to be made the son of *Iahŏu*, the Father. And when you have well considered all these points, be so obliging as to let me know your reasons for disbelieving that *Ie* (Jah) is not the very same solar deity as Ιε or Ιη, of the heathens, namely Apollo—the god of light, as his very name signifies.

Your attention, in the third place, is respectfully, but earnestly solicited to the words *Adoni*, *Adonim*, and *Adonai* (Lords), which very frequently occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, and have almost invariably been rendered, by the English translators, into *Lord*, although plural, like *Aleim*. Now, the term *Adonim*, again, is the name of an idol which represented the sun, and, as the sun, was worshipped at a very early period, by the Phœnicians, Syrians, and other ancient nations, under various titles (Vid. Orphic Hymn. Lucian. de Dea. Syr. ii. Macrob. Satur. lib. ii. c. 21.) This God, however, is invoked, in a vast number of places, throughout the Book of Psalms, under the name of *Adoni* or *Adonim*. His name occurs quite as often as the name Jehova, and the peculiarly characteristic epithets which are applied to him, and distinguish him from other idols, prove, not only that he was worshipped by the Jews, but that he was the self-same *Adonis* with that adored by their neighbours, the Phœnicians. *Adonis* was remarkable for his personal beauty, in honour of which, we find whole psalms sung. "The beauty of holiness" is used as an epithet for him. (See 1 Chron. xvi. 29. 2 Chron. xx. 21. Psal. xxvii. 4; xxix. 2; xlv. 2: xcvi. 9; cx. 3.) The first verse of the last cited psalm, if fairly translated, would run thus:—"*Jehovah* said unto *Adonis*, sit thou at my right hand," &c. In every instance, in the Bible, where *Adonis* occurs, our translators have changed it into *Lord*, or Jehovah, having apparently some dislike to the name of the old Phœnician deity, *Adonis*. There is, however, no room for doubt, that he was worshipped by the Israelites. Both his image and that of Jehovah appear to have had a place in the temple, at Jerusalem,—the former, apparently, in the vestibule of the temple, and the latter on the mercy-seat. *Adonis* is admitted, on all hands, to have been the same with *Tammuz*, and also with *Chemosh*,—both well known idols which represented the sun. The latter is placed on a par with Jehovah by Jephthah, who, in his treaty with the Ammonitish king, says to him, "Wilt thou not possess that which *Chemosh* thy *Aleim* giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever *Iehouh*, our *Aleim*, shall drive out before us, them we will possess." (Jud. xi. 24.) Thus, the inspired Jephthah, who imitated the heathens so far as to offer his own daughter as a burnt offering to Jehovah, clearly recognises the real Godhead of Chemosh. Accordingly, we find Solomon setting up this solar deity at Jerusalem. Jerome [in Isa. xv. 2.] tells us that its form was like that of Baal-peor; consequently, it had the head of an ox, or of a calf—the usual figure of the solar deities as maintained even in the cherubim of Moses. Josiah, who was a zealous Jehovahist, preferring one sun-image to another, removed Chemosh with other idols from Jerusalem. As to the same helio-deity, under the name, *Tammuz*, Ezekiel, [viii. 14.] tells us that he saw women sitting at the gate of Jehovah's house, and weeping for Tammuz. Jerome, in the place already cited, assures us that *Tammuz* was the same with *Adonis*, (*our Lord*) who, he says, was called Tammuz, in the Hebrew and Syriac. Now,

if we attend to the following description given by Lucian and other writers, of *Adonis* who, they say, was one and the same with *Tammuz*, we shall be enabled to form a tolerably correct idea of the cause that the women, seen by Ezekiel, wept at the gate of the temple. The worship of Adonis was celebrated in the temple of Venus, at Byblus, in Syria. [Strabo xvi.] This god, who, as we have already seen, was a very handsome deity, and called "the beauty of holiness," was a very great favourite of Venus. He was, at length, mortally bitten by a wild boar, which he was hunting; but, after his death, he was raised from the dead. Now, the Syrians maintained that it was in their country the wild boar attacked and killed Adonis; and, in commemoration of the fatal event, on a certain day of every year, they celebrated frantic rites throughout the land, with great wailings and lamentations, after which they performed the funeral obsequies of Adonis. On one of the following days, they pretended that he had risen to life and ascended into heaven. At this event they shaved their heads, both men and women; and whoever of the women refused to have their heads thus shaved, were obliged to prostitute themselves, during one day, to strangers at the temple; and the money they thus earned was consecrated to Venus. [Lucian. de Dea Syria.] Now, there can be little doubt that such women as these Ezekiel saw at the temple weeping for Tammuz. In the time of Moses, [Ex. xxxviii. 8.] these women "assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation," with looking glasses in their hands, such as their goddess Venus is said to have carried in her hand. [Callimach. Hymn. in Lavacr. Pall. lin. 21.] The Jewish priest, Eli, is very wrath with his sons, because "they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." [1 Sam. ii. 22.] For the women who assembled for these purposes, there appears to have been, in the temple, a separate court into which to retire, apparently after they were chosen by the men. This was called "the court of the women," and adjoined "the court of the Israelites," as it is called, in contra-distinction to "the court of the Gentiles." The court of the men was on higher ground than the court of the women, so that, over the low stone wall, which separated them, it appears the men could see the women below them, whereas the women could see only those men who looked down over the wall. Around these courts, there were cloisters, galleries, separate apartments, and other places of concealment. [Horne's Introduction, part iii. chap. i. sec. 2. Ezek. viii. 7, 8; xl. 7—36; xli. 5—16; xlii. 3—12.] In the "court of the women," there were placed eleven chests, evidently for receiving, as offerings, portions of the money which the women earned by their prostitution, as we shall see anon. This money was devoted to the sacred uses of the temple. [Jenning's Jewish Antiquities, book iii. c. 1. p. 268.

You will receive a little more light on this matter, if you observe that the writer of the second Book of Kings [xvii. 30.] tells you that the people who had been transplanted into Samaria, and who, he assures us, feared Jehovah, made "*Succoth benoth.*" These words, which, for some mysterious purpose, have been left untranslated, really mean, *the tabernacles*, or tents of *the young women*. Now, it is a well established fact, that, in Syria, Phœnicia, &c., there were tabernacles connected with the temples,

in which young women prostituted themselves in honour of Venus and other deities, under different names. Heredotus, in *Clio*, 199, tells us that every Assyrian young woman was obliged, once in her life, to sit at the temple of Venus, and prostitute herself to some stranger. Such women as were rich and disdained to mingle with those of inferior rank, went to the temple to fulfil this obligation of their country's law, in stately chariots, followed by a numerous train of domestics, crowned with cords for garlands, and took their position at the vestibule. Some were continually coming and going. All the seats had ropes attached to them, so that strangers might have a free passage among the women, and make a choice of whom they liked. A woman being once seated here, was not permitted to return home, until some stranger had thrown a piece of money into her lap, led her away, and defiled her. It was a custom for the stranger, as he threw the money, to say,—"I invoke the goddess Mylitta for thee;" Mylitta being the Assyrian name for Venus. The money thus given, however small a sum, could not be refused, because it was applied to sacred uses. The woman was not allowed to make any distinction, or reject the first man who offered, but must follow him, and, after honouring the goddess, was allowed to return home, never afterwards to be thus degraded. Such as were remarkable for their beauty, were soon enabled to return home; but those who were less prepossessing in appearance, were obliged sometimes to wait three or four years, before they could fulfil the requirements of the law. The inhabitants of Cyprus had the same custom. So also had the inhabitants of Phœnicia. [Vid. Justin. lib. xviii. c. 5. Baruch. vi. 43. Strabo xvi. Lucret. Rer. Nat. lib. i.] Can the foregoing mass of evidence, the whole of which directly points to the same fact, leave any doubt that Adonis, the paramour of Venus, is magnified in the Bible as a god; that this Adonis was the same with Chemosh and Tammuz; that the same abominable mode of worship was performed by the Jewish women in the temple to these gods, as that practised in the heathen temples; and, consequently, that the God represented in the Bible, is that of a grossly idolatrous people?

The word which is rendered *God* in the English Bible, is, in the Hebrew Bible, almost invariably in the plural, *Aleim*, [Gods] exactly in the same manner as we find the heathen gods mentioned in the plural, in Homer, Virgil, or some other profane book. In the Old Testament, the word *Aleim*, [gods] is not used less than 2500 times; and not few times does the plural divine epithet, *Kadoshim*, [the Holy ones] occur. It is in very few instances that we meet with the singular form, *Aleh* or *Alueh* [god], and that when evidently only one god is meant to be designated. The word *Adonim*, as we have seen, is another divine appellation, used in the plural, in the Hebrew Bible, to denote a group of images, worshipped by the Israelites; but like *Aleim*, in the English version, it has been carefully made to appear in the singular, "The Lord," "Our Lord," &c. The word in the Hebrew is scarcely ever met with in its singular form, *Adon*, as signifying a deity, but almost always in the plural *Adonim*, *Adoni*, [Lords.] Were it not for the practice of Christians to look at the Jews through their own delusive theological and theocratic spectacles, it would be utterly needless to multiply proofs of the glaring fact, that these barbarous people were

inveterate polytheists and constant idolators. Very little close thinking would convince them and you, that the numberless sacrifices of animals, fruit, wine, oil, and, occasionally, human beings, which the Jehovah of the Jews in particular, like the fire-gods of the neighbouring nations, demanded, prove that he also was a fire-god, substituted, like others, for the sun; or rather made to represent its light by the glare of flames. He is described in the Bible as delighting in savoury smells of burning fat, and frizzling limbs, and as not to be appeased, but by the perpetual feast of his priests, who gormandised around his altar on fried carcases. Such a god, preached by you and thousands of other hierophants every Sunday—in the present high state of civilization, brought about by the influence of scientific knowledge and learning, and in spite of the clamorous opposition and threatening scowls of interested Christian teachers—must have an immeasurably deteriorating effect upon the morals of the nation. "Tell me the character of the god of a nation," says an eminent writer of the present age, "and I will tell you the character of that nation. If we cast our eye over the history of ancient nations, we shall find a cruel and vindictive nation, believing in a cruel and vindictive god; a polished people, with a classic mythology; and a warlike, but a magnanimous nation, worshipping a god of war, with a character corresponding with the spirit of the nation." A nation that worships a god which is a moral model of perfect intelligence and goodness, must necessarily love these qualities of intelligence and goodness, which constitute the essence of the object of their veneration; so that, by the impressions made upon the national mind, these qualities have a tendency to elevate it in the scale of intelligence and goodness. Hence, the importance of excluding from the national idea of God, everything of a cruel, vindictive, and degrading nature, such as we find in the Bible. It is true that those Christian writers, of this age and country, who philosophise upon the attributes of their God, do not follow the Bible in describing him as a cruel and tyrannical being, possessing neither intelligence nor goodness above a savage; but it is equally true that the vulgar notion of God, entertained by the bulk of Christians, is that taught in the Bible, and is nothing less than mental idolatry.

It is an undeniable fact that the Christians, up to a late period, were from their very origin, polytheists and gross idol-worshippers. Hear that illustrious Christian Father, Austin, [De Morib. Eccles. lib. i. c. 34.] assuring you that they worshipped sepulchres and paintings. Further, hear Theodoret, in his Ecclesiastical History, telling you that the temples of the martyrs were "shining and conspicuous; that they were eminent for their grandeur and the variety of their ornaments." and that some Christians offered the figure of eyes, some of feet, and some of hands, made either of gold or silver. Attend to Justin Martyr's declaration, that "Him and the Son who proceeded from him, *and the host of other good angels* that accompany and resemble him, together with the Prophetic Spirit *do we adore and worship!*" Behold Athanasius, the father and maker of one of the creeds of your church, at the shrine of the Virgin Mary, praying,—"Hear, O daughter of David and of Abraham! Incline thine ear to our supplications, and forget not thy people. Intercede for us, Lady, Mistress, Queen, and mother of God!" Look at the whole of

Christendom, even in the tenth century, with scarcely a dissentient individual, worshipping images, and wallowing in the filth of idolatry. Listen to the voices of the very heads of the Christian Church, in the ninth century, when blamed for their idol-worship by "a man who had been born before his time," exclaiming that, if God the Father "was not to be worshipped with an image, the condition of the immortal God was worse than that of man,"—that "as it was right to set up the statues of mortal men, it must be right to set up the image of God, whom they ought always, if possible, to have before their eyes." (Platina, de vit. Stephani iii.) Behold those who advocated the discontinuance of idol-worship, crushed at the second Council of Nice, and upwards of 300 archbishops, bishops, and priests, at this Council, about the year 788, establishing fully and firmly the ancient Christian practice of image-worship, particularly the worshipping of the image of Jesus upon the cross, which was to be set up in every church. See the punishments decreed against such heretics as I and others are, who would contend that God was the only object of worship. (Du Pin. cent. 8.) Look at the Christian brass statues, particularly in the time of Leo. III, blazing with incense and other holy fire, such as we have seen the Jews and other idolatrous nations, kept burning in their images. For how many centuries have Christians been worshipping the tombs of the martyrs, worshipping angels, crosses, relics of departed saints, and so on? And do not Christians of the present day indulge in such idolatry? Are not the proofs of this fact almost innumerable? Witness the temple of the Virgin Mary, in the Pantheon, at Rome, standing to this very day; and consider that all your churches and cathedrals, even in this country, are dedicated to some saint or saints, formerly worshipped. Listen to the fore-mentioned Lady, in the nineteenth century, by Christians, addressed—"Mary the mother of grace, the mother of mercy, do thou defend us from our enemies, and receive us in the hour of death: *solve vincla reis*,—pardon the guilty; *profer Lumen cœcis*,—give light to the blind; *Jure Matris redemptori imperia*,—by the right of a mother command the Redeemer," &c. "Aye," you may reply, "but these are Papists; we are Protestants, and the only true Christians." Indeed! What would the Christianity of Protestants be, had it not been for those whom you call Papists? Would you, at this very day, have any Christianity at all? In whose custody have the credentials of Christianity been for about fifteen centuries? You, Protestant Christians, are creatures of yesterday, and can know utterly nothing of Christianity, but what you have received concerning it, either from the Church of Rome, or from the Greek Church, both equally idolatrous. It is in these you must look for Christianity in its pristine state. What would you this day know of Christianity, even from your very Bible, had it not been for the labours and writings of the Christian Fathers,—all of whom belonged either to the church of Rome or that of Constantinople? Well, then, all these early Christans were rank idolators, who worshipped the image of Jesus Christ, the image of the Virgin Mary, the images of angels, and the very rotten bones and dust of illustrious saints and courageous martyrs, as is incontrovertibly proved by voluminous evidence that I could adduce.

Let me therefore ask you, Sir, whether it is the Christian God of the Bible, already described, or *the God of Nature* is *your God*,—the God

which is portrayed in this book, or the God whose existence is learnt from the universe? Undoubtedly, you would answer; indeed, according to your profession, you must answer,—"It is the God of the Bible." For, if you say it is the God of nature, then you would own the same God as I do; and, consequently, would, like me, be a Deist. Then, if you worship the God of the Bible, which of us is the idolator? you or I? Which the pagan, who "worships nature, animate and inanimate, as his god?" Is it not *you*, who, on Sundays and week-days, use the idolatrous and sun-worshipping phrases which, in great profusion, I find in the Liturgy, or Common Prayer-Book of your Church, and which you are bound by oath to utter before your congregation? These phrases are such as,—"He bowed down the heavens, he rode upon the *cherubims*, he made darkness his secret place, and thick *clouds* to cover him; at the *brightness* of his presence the *clouds* removed—To thee, *cherubim* and *seraphim*, continually do we cry, Holy, Holy, *Lord God of Sabaoth*; (of hosts) *heaven and earth* are full of the majesty of thy *glory*—The Lord King sitteth *between the cherubim*, be the earth never so unquiet—Show thyself also thou that *sittest between the cherubims*; turn us again thou *God of hosts*, show the *light of thy countenance*, and we shall be whole—Magnify him *that rideth upon the heavens*, as it were upon a horse—O sing praises unto the Lord, who *sitteth in the heavens* over all, from the beginning—Who is he among the *clouds* that shall be compared with the Lord—*O Lord God of Hosts*, who is like unto thee—Blessed is the people, O Lord, that can rejoice in thee; they shall walk *in the light of thy countenance*; for thou art the *glory* of their strength—Thou that makest the *outgoings of the mornings* and the evenings to praise thee, thou *visitest the earth* and blessest it; thou makest it very *plenteous*: thou *preparest their corn*; for so thou providest for *the earth*; thou wettest her furrows, thou sendest rain in the little valleys thereof, thou *crownest the year with thy goodness*, and *thy clouds* drop fatness—Show us *the light of thy countenance*; then shall *the earth bring forth her increase*—The Lord is King, and hath on *glorious apparel*; ever *since the world began* hath thy *seat* been prepared—Thou art *everlasting*; the Lord is King, (Heb. Jehovah is Moloch) the earth may be glad; *clouds* and darkness are round about him; there shall go a *fire* before him; his *lightening* gave *shine* unto the world—O Lord my God, thou art become *exceeding glorious*; thou art *clothed* with majesty and honour; thou deckest thyself with *light* as it were with a garment, and *spreadest out the heavens* like a curtain; who layeth the *beams of his chambers in the waters*, and maketh the *clouds his chariots*, and walketh upon the wings of the wind—He bringeth forth *grass* for the cattle, *green herbs* for the service of man, and oil that maketh him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen a man's heart—The *glorious* majesty of the Lord shall endure for ever—[a graphic description of the effects of the sun]—The Lord is my *light*, behold the *fair beauty* of the Lord; thy *face*, Lord, will I seek; O hide not thy *face* from me—Out of Zion hath God appeared in *perfect beauty*—Lord lift thou up the *light of thy countenance* upon us; thou hast put gladness in my heart, since the time their *corn*, and *wine*, and *oil* increased—O Lord, send out thy *light* and thy truth—Wherefore hidest thou thy face?—Show thy servant the *light of thy countenance*—The Lord is in his temple,

the Lord's seat is in *heaven*; how long wilt thou *hide thy face* from me? The Lord *looketh down from heaven* upon the children of men—The children of men shall put their trust under the *shadow of thy wings*; for with thee is the *well* of life, and in thy *light* shall we see *light*—Cast thy *bright beams of light* upon thy church—O God, who hast caused the *light* of the Gospel to *shine* throughout the world—Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the *King of glory* shall come in. Who is the *King of glory*? The Lord of hosts; he is the *King of glory*—O God, the *King of glory*, the *light* of the Holy Spirit—Very God of very God, *light of light*—Every good and every perfect gift is from *above*, and cometh down from the *Father of lights*—The *day-spring*, from on *high*, hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness—*Glory* be to God *on high*; we bless thee for thy great *glory*, O Lord, *heavenly King*—That which we believe of the *glory* of the Father, the same we believe of the Son—Christ who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his *glorious* body—The *brightness* of his glory, and the express image of his person—The *glory* of the only begotten of the Father—This was the *true light*, which *lighteth* every man that cometh into the world—The life was the *light* of men, and the *light* shineth in darkness—The Lord God shall make my darkness to be *light*—*Light is* come into the world—The *glory* of the eternal Trinity—The *glory of the Lord* shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it—The *light of the glorious* Gospel—The *light* of the knowledge of the *glory* of God in the *face* of Jesus Christ—Lord God of *hosts*, heaven and earth are full of thy *glory*—*Glory* to the Lord most *high*—The Son of man shall sit in the throne of his *glory*—There was a rainbow about the throne, and out of the throne proceeded *lightenings* and *thunderings*, and there were seven *lamps burning* about the throne, and round about the throne were four beasts; the first beast was like a *lion*, and the second like a *calf*, and the third beast had a face as of a *man*, and the fourth beast was like a flying *eagle*; and the four beasts had each of them *six wings* about him; and when the beasts gave *glory*, &c. [an exquisite description of the cherubim adored by the Israelites, in their fire-worship]—The *glory* that shall be revealed hereafter—The children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, because the *glory* of his countenance; now, shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather *glorious*? For if the ministration of the condemnation be *glory*, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in *glory*—This is the message which I have heard of him, and declare unto you, that *God is light*, and in him there is no darkness—And suddenly there appeared round about him a *light* from heaven—The *glorious* resurrection of Jesus Christ our *Lord*, who appeared to all his Apostles." But I must desist.

The foregoing passages,—with each of which, doubtless, you, Sir, who have to utter them, week after week, and year after year, are so familiar, as to be able to recite them by rote,—are only a small sample out of hundreds of other fire-worshipping and sun-worshipping expressions, which are in the Liturgy of your Church. Who, then, let me again ask, is the idolator? Have you not still the image of Christ in your churches, representing the rays of the sun about his head, such as were about Apollos'

head, and accompanied with I. H. S. (Ιης) that is, Apollo, the sun? Who is the polytheist? I, a Deist, who deny the existence of more than one God? or you, a Christian, who believe in three Gods, and, every Sunday, declare—"the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God?" Away with the assertion that you, "as a Christian worship the God who created nature." You, in common with all Christians, worship three imaginary gods, in the language of the grossest idolatry of which we have an account, and are mentally as much of a polytheist and of an idolator as any one of the Jews, or of the nations which surrounded them ever was; and are always speaking of the fingers, hands, arms, ears, eyes, face, feet, wounds, blood, and other bodily parts of your gods.

As you request me "to consider carefully and seriously the following question," I will, even, at the expence of writing to you a long letter, try to do so, although I can see nothing in it. It is that, since "modern infidels" allow that all mankind, as they are taught by *nature*, are creatures of the same Creator, and fellow-creatures one with another, all their religious duties must properly and necessarily be the *same*; whereas their natural religion, on which they severally rely for support, comfort, and happiness, "either as to its *uniformity* or *unanimity*, is observable, both in theory and in practice, to be vastly unequal in its various degrees, from some very slight and imperfect conception of a *creating* God, to *no* notion whatever *of any* Creator! Can you *satisfactorily* (you ask) explain this strange anomaly in your infidel creed? If not, I must say that modern infidels, in their scheme of *morality*, or *Natural Religion*, as they call it, are *fundamentally* wrong." All that you mean here, evidently, is, that since "modern infidels" are not uniform in their views and practice of morality, "natural religion is *fundamentally* wrong;" that is, if the professors of this religion differ from one another regarding its doctrines, and vary in their practice of it, the religion itself must therefore be fundamentally wrong. This, I think is the gist of your argument here. If this position were tenable, it would irrefragably prove that Christianity was thoroughly wrong. I presume that you will not deny that two things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, and that "what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." On this principle, therefore, let us apply your reasoning to Christianity, in order to prove whether it is, or is not "*fundamentally* wrong." Have you ever read the works of any two Christian writers, who advanced precisely the same views of Christianity? Have you ever met with two Christians whose respective creeds and practices, on all points of Christian doctrine and discipline, were precisely the same? Can you point out any two books in your Bible, which do not materially contradict each other, in a great number of things, either doctrinal or historical, or both?

Of all religionists, perhaps, never have any been less unanimous in their views, and less uniform in their theological doctrines, their religious practices and ceremonies, than Christians, from the very earliest time we have any account of their religion, down to the present day. No religionists have ever carried on such fiery debates, and such long-continued contests, with one another, in reference to what should be believed and practised in Christendom. I doubt not that the following examples of

their religious disagreements, will prove very salutary to your soul, both intellectually and morally, by way of making you, in future, a little more careful not to advance things which, either you know cannot be substantiated, or about which you know nothing. If you study the history of Christianity, you will find that, in reference to "the Author and Finisher of your faith," there was among very early Christians a grave doubt as to his real existence. Some denied that he was a man; others that he was a God. Some believed that he was a phantom, and never had had any corporeal existence; others, that he had a material body, but that he had not been born of a Virgin, or even born at all, but had appeared on earth in full maturity, having collected a body out of the four elements—earth, fire, water, and air—in his descent from heaven. Some believed that, as Jesus, he was one person, and, as Christ, another. Some believed him to be a God subordinate to the Father, while others maintained that both were co-equal. Some contended that he had no divine nature of his own, but that the Father dwelt in him. Some believed that he had been created, and others that he had always existed. Some denied that he had a human soul, and others held that he had. Some affirmed that he was forty, or even fifty years of age, when he commenced his public ministry; others that he died at the age of thirteen. Some—among whom was Barnabas, once Paul's companion, but afterwards his antagonist—believed that Jesus was not crucified at all, but was taken up into heaven by four angels; others, believing in his crucifixion, maintained that, when he died, he descended into hell or *Hades*—like Orpheus, Adonis, Bacchus, Theseus—and there preached the gospel so effectually that he emptied this unhappy region of all its inhabitants, carrying them with him into heaven, which doctrine your Church appears to hold to this very day, since it teaches, in "the Apostles' Creed," that "he descended into hell;" but others were of opinion that he did not enter hell at all. Some believed that, at his crucifixion, he suffered no pain at all; but others, in every sermon and prayer, dwelt with pathos on the infinity of his sufferings. Some believed that he did not die to make satisfaction for sin at all, but died as a martyr; while others maintained that he died to atone for the sins of the elect, and others went further, contending that he died to atone for the sins of all mankind. Some Christians, even of the first century, believed that he did not rise from the dead at all, and would not rise till the general resurrection, while others maintained that he had risen on the third day and ascended into heaven.

Again, as to "God the Father," ancient Christians believed that he had a body, but modern Christians hold that he is "without body, parts, or passion." Many of the ancient Christians, such as Jerome, denied the providence of God the Father, so far as to teach that "it was absurd so to abuse the majesty of God as to imagine that he noticed how many gnats were bred and died every hour, how many bugs, fleas, and flies there were throughout the world, how many fishes swam in the sea, which among the smaller fishes fell a prey to the larger; and that men should not to be such foolish flatterers of God as to make his power thus stoop to the lowest things;" but modern Christians teach that God numbers the hairs of one's head, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without his

knowledge, permission, and providence. Some ancient Christians maintained that prayers could be addressed only to the Father; but others held that it was Christ, the Virgin Mary, angels, and departed saints, who should be invoked. Some few of the primitive Christians believed there was only one mediator between God and man, while the rest believed there were many thousands of such mediators, including the Holy Virgin, all martyrs, and eminent saints.

Moreover, as to the third person in the Trinity, some of the ancient Christians believed that the Holy Ghost had been begotten by the Son, and others, that the Son had been begotten by the Holy Ghost, while a third party believed that the Holy Ghost had proceeded from both the Son and the Father, and a fourth maintained that he was not a distinct person from the Father and the Son; but modern Christians repudiate all these notions, and invoke the Holy Ghost as a personal God, distinct from God the Father, and God the Son. Further, all the earlier Christians worshipped images; but all the modern Christians, in this country, except those very antique followers of Jesus—the Roman Catholics—abhor images. In process of time, some Christians rose up, and denounced image-worship as wrong, while others defended the practice; and tremendously fierce was the contention, on this point, for centuries, disturbing whole nations, and overthrowing dynasties and empires. Some maintained that the blood of Christ should be worshipped, and others contended that it should not, because it was no part of his divine nature. Ancient Christians believed that angels had material bodies, and were worthy of worship; but modern Christians believe them to be spirits, and refuse to adore them. All ancient Christians believed in the miraculous power of the relics of saints, and of the bones, garments, and cross of a god, and fervently worshipped them; but modern Christians, if we except the Roman Catholics and members of the Greek church, condemn such practices as idolatrous, while, at the same time, in language and ideas—in all things but the very idols, they are themselves idolators.

Again, as to the soul, many ancient Christians believed it was created by God at the instant it entered the body, while others maintained that it was propagated with the body. Most of them also believed it was corporeal, endued with form and figure; but modern Christians teach that it has neither form nor any of the properties of matter. Most of the ancient Christians maintained that the souls of the dead, both good and bad, went to subterraneous abodes, while others held that the soul perished with the body, although at the resurrection, it would again be raised into life with the body; but modern Christians teach that all souls are immortal, and that the souls of the wicked, in death, go *down* to hell, while those of the good and pious, go *up* to heaven. Some of the early Christians maintained that the souls of the dead, in heaven, saw and heard all that went on here below, while others were of opinion that they acquired all their information of the state of terrestrial things, from souls which continually departed this life, and entered the regions of bliss. Luther, and many others, taught that the soul, from death to the resurrection, slept; but Calvin taught that, after death, it was either hurled into hell torments, or wafted up to heavenly happiness. Most of the very earliest Christians

believed that the souls of all the deads had to be purified by fire, called, in later times, purgatory; but some few dissented from this notion. Some believed that all mankind would, ultimately, be rescued from this fire, through the intercession of saints, whereas others were of opinion that, at the day of judgment, all the human race would be annihilated. Eckius maintained that purgatory was at the bottom of the sea; others, that it was in Mount Etna. Sir Thomas Moore thought that the punishment in purgatory was by fire; but his fellow sufferer, Fisher, and also Bede, the ecclesiastical historian, held that it was by fire and water, while Lorichius taught that it was by violent convulsions. Fisher was of opinion that the tormentors would be the holy angels; but Moore taught that they would be the devils. Dennis, the Carthusian, held that the pangs of purgatory would endure to the end of the world; but Dominicus à Soto limited them to ten years, while a host of other Christians maintained that the time depended upon the number of prayers and masses said for the dead, and, of course, the amount of money paid. Thomas Aquinas thought the pangs of purgatory quite as intense as those of hell itself; but the Rhemists were persuaded that purgatory was not, upon the whole, a very uncomfortable place, while Durandus was sure that the souls in it enjoyed an intermission of pain, during Sundays and Holy-days. Most of the early Christians, like Bishop Conon, believed that the body, at the resurrection, would be only a *form;* but others maintained it would be a *real* body. The primitive Christians believed that all should not be raised at once, in the general resurrection, but that the human race would have to come up by degrees, according to their spiritual rank; whereas modern Christians teach that all shall be raised at once, in the twinkling of an eye. A great many of the early Christians entertained the notion that, after the resurrection, men should beget an infinite number of children, during no less a period than a thousand years; but Christians of the present day teach us that, "in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage." Early Christians believed that heaven was shut up, and would continue so, even against the faithful, till the resurrection; but now-a-days, at least Protestant Christians, waft the souls of their friends thither, the moment death ensues. Ancient Christians did not regard the whole of the books of our present Old and New Testament as Divine; but modern Christians maintain that all these books, and even all the words they contain, are purely Divine communications.

Besides, in their religious customs and discipline, early Christians widely differed from one another, and still more widely from Christians of the present age. Some of them repeated the baptism of their converts as often as they fell into an error in religion, either doctrinal or practical, while others baptized their catechumens but once. The Christian converts of ancient times, when baptized, had salt, milk, and honey administered to them,—were exorcised, so as to be utterly rid of all evil spirits,—were anointed,—were made recipients of the Holy Ghost, so as to be able to work miracles,—were spat in their faces, mouths, eyes, and ears, by the priest, whom they were made to kiss. But, with the exception of the Lutherians, who still exorcise, and the Roman Catholics, who adhere to the antique practice of anointing the baptized, modern Christians discard

all these salutary rites, and substitute for them interminable contentions as to whether they should baptize infants as well as adults, and whether baptism should be administered by dipping or sprinkling. The primitive Christians baptized in seas, rivers, and pools; but those of our time baptize in cisterns, in bowls which they call fonts, and even in basins and cups. Ancient Christians met so often as twice a week to celebrate "the Lord's Supper;" but modern Christians commune only once a month, and some, only once in three months, or more. Anciently, the bread for this ceremony was provided by the communicants, as an offering, but now it is provided either by the deacons, churchwardens, or, in the shape of thin wafers, by the priests. All primitive Christians gave the *kiss of charity, the kiss of peace*, or *the holy kiss*, so frequently enjoined by the Apostle Paul, to one another, before they partook of the Lord's supper; but now Christians have so far altered their opinions and practices on this point, that, for the kiss of charity, in many instances, they substitute a despising, scowling side-glance at one another. Formerly, the priests put the bread —as they afterwards put the wafers substituted for it—in the mouths of the communicants; but, in these times of Christian refinement, priests are not so obliging. In celebrating this rite, some ancient Christians used wine and water mixed, others, wine alone, and others, water only. A great many of them threw a flood of light on the whole proceeding by the use of wax-candles, torches, or flambeaux; but the Waldenses and other Christians discountenanced this remnant of fire-worship. In the earlier days of Christianity, its devotees were sworn, by a solemn oath, never to divulge to the uninitiated the mysteries of the ceremony of the Lord's Supper, and of its concomitant practices, in which they indulged in the depth of night; but modern Christians, having purged this rite of much of its pristine paganism, celebrate it now in open daylight, and in the face of the world. Justyn Martyr, Cyril, Anastasius, Damascenus, with all the rest of the Christian Fathers—like the present church of Rome—believed that, in the bread and wine, used at this ceremony, there was Divine virtue, and that they were literally the flesh and blood of Jesus; but more modern Christians spurn this notion. Luther maintained that the presence of the body of Jesus was in the Eucharist, and Calvin taught that there was Divine virtue in the bread and wine; but Socinus, who regarded the Lord's Supper as merely a commemoration of the death of Jesus, is followed in opinion by the majority of present Christians. The ancient followers of the Lamb, however, worshipped the bread and wine, which they called the *host*, and carried about in their processions, as if they had a human, or other sacrifice to be offered to their gods, and afterwards to be devoured by themselves; but so far have Christians of the present time degenerated, that these practices are now quite obsolete, in this country. The primitive Christians, except in celebrating religious rites, abstained from eating any animals which had blood, or had been strangled, that is, flesh-meat; but modern Christians, at all seasons, voraciously devour beef, mutton, and even pork, unattended with the least remorse of conscience. Frequent vigils, in expectation of seeing their Lord coming in the clouds to judge the world, were kept by ancient Christians; but modern Christians display no such anxiety touching his advent. In the primitive ages of Christianity,

its professors were, by the priests, made to fast, till they were almost famished, as a punishment for their sins; but now, however sinful a Christian may be, he is allowed to have his "meat in due season," from Lent to Lent. The most illustrious Christians of old dismembered themselves, shunned the conversation and the very sight of women, ran naked about deserts, lived among wild beasts, subsisted on green grass, indigenous herbs and roots, and accomplished a thousand feats of bodily mortification. But the Christians of the present day so far differ from these celebrated saints that they reject altogether the doctrine and practice of bodily mortification, so strongly recommended and, apparently, practised by the Apostle Paul. In fairness, however, an exception must here be made in favour of the Roman Catholic Christians, called *Flangellants*, or self-whippers, who, at Rome and other places, even to this day, march through the streets half-naked, with whips in their hands, and, as they go along, lash their own bare backs till they are covered with blood. At certain seasons, they whip themselves, in a similar manner, in the churches. But to proceed: ancient Christians promoted their religion by such means as the Holy Inquisition, the sword, the axe, and other instruments of death; but modern Christians, in this country, have abandoned these mighty powers, and are daily drifting towards that infidel mode of conversion, called *reason*. Ancient Christians used to burn heretics; but modern Christians only defame and calumniate them, or, at most, fine and imprison them. Ancient Christians tested suspected heretics by throwing them into deep water,—if they could and would swim, they were thereby proved to be heretical; if they sank and were drowned, they were shown to be orthodox. But modern Christians have become so depraved that they go for proof of orthodoxy into the Court of Arches, or of Delegates. Ancient Christians kept the doors of their churches and cathedrals always open, in order that criminals might run in, and thereby escape punishment for the most heinous and revolting crimes; but modern Christians behave so uncharitably towards such characters as to keep their churches and chapels locked up for more than five-seventh parts of every week in the year. I must not, however, pursue this contrast any further. Sufficient has been advanced to show that *the present Christianity is entirely a new religion*,—is utterly different in doctrine and discipline, in theory and practice, from the Christianity of old; however odd it may appear that a Divine religion should grow purer the further it flows from its source. Any of the foregoing statements you may be inclined to question, please to point out, and I will furnish you with ample historical proof, which I now omit, in thus enumerating, off hand, facts which are recorded in most ecclesiastical histories.

If we glance at the various sects of Christians now existing, we shall find them, both in doctrine and discipline, quite as dissimilar to one another as those of olden times. Indeed, just as the thousands of Christian sects which have existed—but which have long ago vanished, so that the very names of some of them have sunk into utter oblivion—prove the disagreement between the followers of Jesus, so the vast number of Christian sects that at present exist, are a standing, living monument of the same thing. For example, the Calvinistic Christians of the present age believe that God has elected a definite number of human beings to eternal life, and that he

sent his Son to die only for these, while he had predestined all the rest of mankind to everlasting torments; but the Arminians, or Wesleyans, deny election and predestination, and contend that Christ died for the whole human race. The former believe that, if a man once have grace, he can never lose it; but the latter hold the doctrine of "falling from grace," which means that a man may be a saint to-day and a fiend to-morrow. The former believe in the doctrine of original sin; but most of the latter repudiate it. Some Christians deny the work of the Holy Ghost, in regenerating and sanctifying men; others zealously maintain this doctrine. Some deny the special providence of God, others believe in it. The Church of England and the Church of Rome believe in the necessity of archbishops, bishops, deans, arch-deacons, church-wardens, and a host of other officers; but the numerous sects of Dissenters deny that such functionaries are of Apostolic appointment. The Roman Catholics maintain that the Pope is the head of the church; the Greek church says it is its own Patriarch; the Episcopalians hold that it is the Queen of England; and all the Nonconformists contend that it is Jesus Christ. Some Christians adhere to the ancient practice of absolving and forgiving sins, and of affording indulgences; but others will neither absolve nor dispense indulgences, "for either love or money." Some confess all their sins to their priests, by way of making "a clean breast of it;" but others keep their most heinous offences as secret as their predecessors kept the mysteries of their love-feasts. Some observe a great number of holy-days and feasts; others treat such days with contempt. Some have six or seven sacraments; others, only two. Some have feet-washing as a holy ordinance; others ignore it. The Baptists believe that only adults should be baptized, and that this rite should be performed by immersion; but almost all other sects believe that infants should be baptized, and that to sprinkle them is amply sufficient. The Church of England and that of Rome believe that baptism regenerates children; but other sects pronounce this notion to be gross superstition. The Church of Rome holds the ancient doctrine of transubstantiation; but the Church of England, and all the Nonconformists of this country denounce it. The Episcopalians must have sponsors in baptism; but other sects ridicule the custom. The former attach great importance to the ceremony of confirmation; but the latter think it useless. Indeed, the points of difference in belief between the existing sects of Christians, and even between persons belonging to the same sect, are almost innumerable.

If, therefore, the want of "uniformity or universality, both in theory and practice," is, in Deists, a proof that their "scheme of morality, or natural religion," is "fundamentally wrong," by parity of reason, a similar want of "uniformity or universality, both in theory and practice," in Christians, is likewise a proof that their "scheme of morality is fundamentally wrong." If the Vicar of Whaplode has proved anything at all, by this allegation, he has, certainly, "proved too much;"—he has proved, not only that "Natural Religion is fundamentally wrong," but that Christianity is also "fundamentally wrong." For the points of difference in belief between Christians are infinitely more numerous and important than they are between Natural Religionists. But, supposing that Natural Religionists

differed from one another "in theory and in practice" to the extent which you allege, would this prove that, "in their scheme of morality, or Natural Religion," they "are fundamentally wrong?" Clearly, it would not, and that, more especially, in the case of such a religion as that of nature, derived, as it is, entirely from experience and observation, which, according to the human constitution and its relation to external objects, can only gradually be obtained and made,—the experience and observation, of one man to-day being, by another, or perhaps by himself, to-morrow confirmed, or, it may be, rectified, in certain minute details; so that man thus continually progresses in natural knowledge, from age to age, and from day to day. This is an undeniable fact. But it is absurd to allege that, because a man errs, or entertains different opinions from others, on some unessential points, all the knowledge he has acquired by experience and observation is "fundamentally wrong." Just as well might it be said that, because a person, in working a problem in mathematics, happens to err in drawing conclusions, or in laying down premises, the science of mathematics is "fundamentally wrong," and that it is an error to believe that things which are equal to the same, are equal to one another, or that the whole is greater than its parts. Accordingly, were it true that Freethinkers differed from one another in belief to the extent you imagine, this would not at all be wonderful,—would not reflect the least discredit upon them. It would show that they were thinking men, forming opinions for themselves, individually. Although truth is consistent, yet, in seeking it, men, placed in different circumstances, and being differently organised, honestly form different opinions, especially in matters of detail; but, at length, by comparing notes, or putting their respective opinions to the test of evidence, they simultaneously arrive both at unity of opinion and perfect truth. This is particularly the case in newly acquired sciences, concerning which, when their principles, or fundamental truths, have only just been discovered, and are in an imperfect state of development, many erroneous opinions are formed, and many blunders are committed, in adapting them to useful purposes. This forcibly applies to all the sciences which at present exist. It was not on the day of their discovery that they were brought to their present comparatively perfect state, which will, in process of time, be absolute perfection. Precisely the same it is with the Freethinker's science of morality, or, as you call it, "Natural Religion." It is comparatively new. It is not like Christianity, nearly two thousand years old. It is but lately that Freethinkers have been allowed to *think* at all, or, at least, to express their thoughts. Christian hierohpants have, for many centuries, kept the people of this country, as well as those of other countries, in gross ignorance, and have, with noisy denunciations—with threats of the axe, the fagot, the fire, and eternal damnation—strenuously opposed, and successfully prevented the promulgation of every new discovery, whether in morals or physics. The populace of this country, as a natural consequence, being to the present hour in a state of gross ignorance, and the very Bible, which their priests preach to them, having been studiously kept from them, till about four centuries ago—and indeed, to all intents and purposes, till about a century ago—leading Freethinkers, therefore, have very crude materials upon which to operate. They have to extricate their disciples from the net-

work of Christian superstition in which they are entangled. They have to disabuse their minds of the erroneous notions under which they labour,—notions which have been transmitted to them by their progenitors, from time immemorial, and which form, as if it were, part of their very constitution. They have, with difficulty, to divert their attention from the numerous and conflicting systems of false religion, which are daily forced upon them by thousands of paid agents, from every quarter, in tracts, in weekly and even daily sermons, in prayers, liturgies, and litanies; in every christening, marriage, and burial; indeed in every circumstance, stage, and condition of life. The converts of Freethinkers having been nurtured, from infancy, in such a hot-bed of forced Christianity as this country is, and—after they are brought to perceive the errors of the Christian dogmas—having to associate continually with people who are overwhelmed in gross superstition, is it at all wonderful that there should be some discrepancy in their new religious belief, or that the "creed" of one should be at variance with that of another? Hitherto, however, so incessant and fierce have been the struggles of leading Freethinkers with the Christians of all sects for a bare hearing, either on the platform, or through the press, that they have had little opportunity to enunciate any fixed code of religious belief. Their work, as yet, has been, and must continue to be, for some time, not to proclaim their own system, but to expose the fallacies of the present systems of Christians,—not to disseminate truths, but to eradicate errors,—not to establish their own principles of morality, but to undermine the prevalent superstitious fabrics of the age. Before a person builds a new house on the site of an old one, he must, of course, demolish and clear away the old, in order to make room for the new. But the fact that the old structure is being pulled down, is no proof that a newer and better edifice will not be built. So with Freethinkers, they must remove error, in order to establish truth. But the fact that they think proper to do this first, furnishes no proof that they will not afterwards present to the world a consistent system of truth. The case however is very different in reference to Christianity,—a religion whose advocates have been allowed nearly two thousand years to form a consistent creed, and, at this very day, afford no sign of their ability to do so,—a religion which rejects the testimony of human reason and experience, as evidence of its truth,—a religion which scorns to have been either discovered or invented by man, and claims to be a pure revelation from God. Such a religion we have a right to expect to be *perfect*, in every point whatever,—to be one which it would be impossible for men to differ in belief touching any doctrinal or practical point belonging to it; in a word, we have a right to expect uniformity of belief among all Christians; and the diversity of creeds and practices prevalent among them, as already pointed out, is a strong proof that their religion is utterly devoid of its boasted Divine origin.

You say that "the notions entertained by Freethinkers upon religion are so very absurd, and their writings so amazingly contradictory, when compared one with another," &c. Pray, can you find any "notions entertained by Freethinkers upon religion, so very absurd" as the following "notions upon religion," entertained and advanced by the most renowned

Christians of whom you can boast?—"Christ is thought to have felt *pain*, because he *suffered;* but he was really *free from pain.*"—*St. Hilary.* "The extension of a man's arms, and the prominency of his nose, are emblems of the Cross of Jesus."—*Justin Martyr.* "There cannot be more nor less than four Gospels, because there are only four corners to the world, and four cardinal winds."—*Irenæus.* "I affirm that the Son of God died. Well, that is perfectly credible, because it is grossly absurd. I maintain that, after his burial, he rose from the dead; and that I believe to be perfectly true, because it is evidently impossible."—*Tertullian.* Again, let me ask, can you find, in the works of Freethinkers, any "writings so amazingly contradictory" as the following?"—"Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be also like unto him."—"Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."—*Solomon.* "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is *not* true."—"I bear record of myself, yet my record *is* true."—*Jesus Christ.* "It repented the Lord that he made man."—*Moses.* "The Lord is not a man that he should repent."—*Samuel.* "I please all men."—"If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."—*Paul.* "By the work of the law shall no flesh living be justified."—*Paul.*—"Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works?"—*James.* If you know of any passages in the writings of Freethinkers "so amazingly contradictory" as the foregoing, together with thousands of others of the sort from the same sources, be good enough to point them out.

As to the clumsy and contradictory "creed" which you attribute to "the unbeliever," I unhesitatingly declare it to be the fabrication of a Christian, who acted on the principle of "pious fraud," with important additions made by you; and I therefore take no further notice of it. If I make a false assertion herein, it will be your imperative duty, in justification of yourself to prove the falsity of such an assertion. Further, it is a duty which devolves upon you to bring forward substantial proofs, that there are in my previous letter "miserable fallacies, wilful misrepresentations, and perverse distortions." Surely, you will not allow yourself to appear so unmanly as to make such sweeping charges as these, without adducing a tittle of evidence to substantiate them.

In reference to your application to me of Paul's imprecations upon Elymas—his rival in theomancy, and thaumaturgery—I will, on condition that, in the meantime, you do not, as a Christian, exercise your miraculous power so far as to strike me blind, as Paul struck Elymas, promise to attend to the Apostle's denouncing words as soon as you can produce substantial evidence that he was not, like all the Christian teachers of primitive times, a believer in the moral virtue of "pious fraud;" or, in other words, a believer in the general doctrine that it was praiseworthy to tell a falsehood, in order to promote the interests of Christianity, when he wrote thus:—"If the *truth* of God hath more abounded through my LIE, *unto his glory*, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" Until you produce such evidence, I can place no confidence in any words spoken or written by Paul, who could stoop so low as to make his "*unrighteousness* commend the righteousness of God,"—become as a Jew to the Jews, that he might

gain them,—make himself all things to all men, for the gospel's sake,—and, according to his own boast, tell a falsehood in order to advance the *truth* and *glory* of God.

In the mean while, I remain,
Reverend Sir, your obedient servant,
E. P. MEREDITH.

Rev. John Fairfax Francklin, M. A.
Vicar of Whaplode, Spalding.

Whaplode, Spalding,
28th March, 1866.

SIR,

I have, at length, waded through your long, uninteresting, and dreary string of assertions and doubly "*rechaufe*" opinions; and I must say, were I to spend as many *minutes*, in replying to your tirade against the Bible and the believers in the Bible, as you have *weeks*, in concocting the "hotch potch" with which you have so lately *favoured* me, I should only *waste* time, which might otherwise be profitably *spent*. You must therefore excuse this very brief rejoinder. There is not a single idea, with any pretension to *novelty*, in your entire production; and you must have been sound asleep for the last fifty years, (if you are so old,) if you should venture to contradict my assertion. Why, Sir! "HARRIS, from whom you take your crude notions about "*fire-worshippers*," (you ought to have said "*fire-eaters*,") wrote his flimsy speculations when "old times were new." And, really, unless you find something *fresh*, wherewith to tickle the palate of noodles, depend upon it, your opinions, whether written or *printed*, will serve but to add fuel to "*fire*," and "*blaze gloriously*" away at the back of some well tended *stove* of a "*fire-worshipper*," like myself.

In fact, as an honest believer in my Christian faith, I must tell you, in all sincerity, the greatest consolation I derived from your laboured and vapid lucubrations was this:—that, *while* you were vainly bothering the brains which you possess, in order to pervert *my* judgment, you were physically unable to *do so in any other quarter*.

In conclusion, therefore, I beg to observe, (if you wish to succeed) you had better turn your attention to some other individual of *more impressible* nature. But before you "*open fire*," ascertain that your "guns are *shotted*;" or else you will never bring down your man, however well you may lay your gun. And, above all, remember the old adage,—"Antiquæ aves, non capiuntur chaffo.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.
J. F. FRANCKLIN.

E. P. Meredith, Esq.
Agincourt Square, Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
April 30th, 1866.

REVEREND SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ult. But I am sorry to find that, like its predecessors, it is no reply whatever to my last communication, which it pretends to answer. I charged you with having a Bible and Common Prayer Book replete with the language and doctrines of the ancient Zabians, or worshippers of the sun and of fire,—with having for your inspired writers, those gross idolators, the Jews,—with having a pretendedly Divine religion, the doctrines of which have been changed a thousand times, and are still the cause of contentions, bickerings and schisms between Christians of the present age; and I also gave you a vast number of proofs to substantiate my statements. But you do not rebut one of these charges. Hence, I am entitled to infer that you find it impossible to controvert the clear and undeniable truth of those things which I have advanced against the Divine origin of Christianity. In your last letter, you make no attempt to deal with any of the points at issue; nor do you raise any new theological question. It is, therefore, a letter which, in reality, calls for no reply from me.

I may, however, contradict some false statements and other strange allegations which it contains, on matters foreign to the subject on which you first wrote to me. For instance, you would have that I spent many "*weeks* in concocting" my last letter to you. Of course, this assertion is purely gratuitous—unsupported by the shadow of evidence—and happens to be diametrically opposed to truth. I did not spend *many days* "in concocting" my last letter. I think, truly, that I did devote the greater part of two days to reply to you, much of which time was taken up in selecting, from the Bible and Common Prayer Book, the striking passages used by sun and fire-worshippers, which I submitted to you.

Further, you accuse me of having taken my "crude notions about fire-worshippers from "Harris." I have to assure you that I have never seen the work of that "Harris" to whom you refer. I thank you, Sir, for the compliment you pay me, namely, that of calling me a plagiarist, but would inform you that I can, and do think for myself, and feel pleasure in being conscious that I am an independent thinker; my aim being always to embrace what my own reasoning powers pronounce to be true, against whatever systems it may militate, and with whatever authority it may clash. When I adopt the opinion of any author, I quote that author. This charge, on your part, is, certainly, most recklessly made. If you had any proof that I had taken my "crude notions about fire-worshippers from "Harris"—that I had taken even a single sentence from him, *why did you not adduce it?* Or, if you *have* any such proof, I challenge you *now* to adduce it. Although I have never seen the work of this writer, yet, I venture to say that, whatever has been written by "Harris," there is no more similarity between it and what I have written to you, either in words or arrangement of ideas, than can incidentally happen between the writings of two men treating on the same facts, quite independently of each other, and quite strangers to each other's notions; in a word, I venture to say that what "Harris" has written on fire-worship, and what I have written

to you differ very widely,—so widely that no man capable of judging, and honest enough to pronounce the result of his comparison, would say or even think that they were alike. If so, where then is the deficiency in you? and of what character is this deficiency? Is it mental, arising from natural inability to compare and contrast? Or is it of a moral character, emanating from a propensity to state what is not true, or, at least, what you do not know to be true, while, like St. Paul, you rejoice in the question,—"If the *truth* of God hath more abounded through my *Pseusmati*, unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" (Rom. iii. 7.)

You call my last letter a "string of assertions and doubly *rechaufe* (meaning, I suppose, *rechauffe*,) opinions," and you say,—"There is not a single idea, with any pretension to *novelty*, in your entire production." But all *truths*, especially of nature, are necessarily old,—stale if you like. Whatever is now true of nature has always been true; and whatever is true, either in favour or against the Divine origin of Christianity, has been so since the establishment of this religion. I do not profess to write *Novels* for you, but to state plain truths and stubborn facts. If these are old, and have been stated many times before, they are none the worse for that. Before your opposition to them, on account of their staleness, great age, or want of novelty, can have any weight, they must be shown not to be real truths, or facts. If you think that this has already been done, you have only to adduce what has been advanced by others, in order to refute my objections to your religion and its credentials. But by whom have the objections urged by Freethinkers against Christianity been logically and successfully refuted? Where are such refutations to be found? The arguments advanced against Christianity, in its earlier days, by Celsus, Hierocles, Porphyry, and others, stand good to this very hour,—are, in a word, still unanswered. For example, Celsus argued that the Christian religion "contained nothing" but what it had in common with heathenism,—"nothing new;" and this argument, founded, as it is, upon fact, holds good to this very day,—has never been refuted, but is now supported by a greater mass of historical evidence than ever. Origen, certainly, did not succeed in refuting it, by admitting that the Christian notions of good and evil were shared by the heathens; and the same may be said of Justin Martyr, who, in defending Christianity from the charges brought against it, admits that, as the heathens said the Sons of Jupiter were born of Virgins, without any human mixture, so said the Christians of Jesus,—that, as Æsculapius effected cures, so did Jesus, and that, as all the Sons of Jupiter suffered, so was Jesus crucified. Again, Celsus charges the Christians with having borrowed their views of image-worship from the heathens; but Origen is far from repudiating this charge when, in his reply, he acknowledges that the Christian notions, on this point, were identical with those of the heathens. Celsus accuses the Christians of embracing absurd doctrines without examining them, and identifies their leaders with the designing priests of Mithras, Bacchus, Cybele, and other heathen deities; but Origen does not acquit them of these charges, by answering, that he and the other Christian Fathers found it to be of vast advantage to the vulgar, to teach them to believe without critical examination. (Vid. Just.

Mart. Apolog. maj. Orig. contr. Celsus c. 2, 5, 10.) A great many other such examples could be given, showing that the ancient charges made against Christianity have not yet been refuted, and, being founded in truth, are now as powerful and as applicable as ever. It therefore avails you nothing to cry out that there is no "*novelty*" in what I advance, when showing you that Christianity originated in rank heathenism, that the Jews were gross idolators, and that your Bible and Common Prayer Book abound in phrases used by sun and fire-worshippers. You appear not to know that, on the grounds of "novelty," the tables might be turned to your great disadvantage. Suppose Freethinkers were to urge that all the arguments used to prove the Divine origin of Christianity are, at least, a thousand years old, and that its advocates—even in the present age, when their religion is attacked much more powerfully, and its dogmas rejected much more generally than at any previous period of its existence—do not, in its defence, adduce "a single idea with any pretension to *novelty*." This is emphatically true of Christianity, and thus your argument, founded on the want of "novelty," has the same weight against you, as it has for you. But on neither side does it serve to prove anything. The question is, not whether what is advanced against Christianity is new or old, but whether it is *true*; and the same may be said of what is advanced in its favour. If, however, Christians cannot find any new proofs that their religion is Divine, they can almost daily invent new doctrines, and disseminate them, which, doubtless, they find very convenient; since their old dogmas so frequently turn out to be no longer tenable, in this progressive and enlightened age.

Accordingly, you think that, unless I "find something fresh," my "opinions, whether *written* or printed, will serve but to add fuel to fire," &c.; that I "bother" my brains in order to pervert your "judgment;" and that, if I "wish to succeed," I "had better turn" my "attention to some other individual of more impressible nature" than you, which, doubtless, would be a very easy task. You, further, enjoin me to remember that "old birds are not to be caught with chaff." In all this, you utterly forget that it was at your own importunities our debate commenced, when I had no idea of adding "fuel to fire," no notion of *bothering* my brains in order to pervert your judgment, no desire of turning my attention to an individual of not "more impressible nature than" that of yours, and no design whatever of *catching with chaff* such an *old bird* as you. As I said in my last letter, to engage in this controversy was your own act, for which you appeared to be unaccountably eager. Now, however, you are equally anxious to retreat, and appear to have nothing more to advance in support of your Creed. Matters being thus, the discussion must close. But on a subject of this public and important nature—a subject of no less importance than the defence of Christianity, by the vigorous, well-trained mind, and ingenious pen of the Vicar of Whaplode, Spalding, against the attacks of a Freethinker, such as I am—of course, the whole of our correspondence must be placed before the public, in order that that all-powerful tribunal may judge on what side of the question the truth lies, and decide whether you are right in saying that, unless I "find something *fresh* wherewith to tickle the palate of noodles," (meaning of course the public)

I may "depend upon it," that my "opinions, whether written or printed will serve but to add fuel to fire," &c. In other words, the controversy, *in extenso*, must be printed and published, forthwith. To this course, you cannot possibly have any reasonable objection. In this proposal there is nothing unfair, nothing dishonourable, nothing that can be disadvantageous to you, or to your Creed. For you are a gentleman who has been educated expressly for the defence of Christianity, having received the diploma of *Artium Magister*,—a gentleman who has sworn to defend it, and who, at this moment is one of its paid protectors. Further, as your controversial abilities furnish a fair specimen of those of the clergy of the Established Church generally, who pride themselves in that they are the most learned and talented body of Christians in the world, the course I propose will enable the public to appreciate the sort of arguments used by their most educated and intelligent *religious guides*, when the dogmas of their Creed are subjected to a critical examination. You will, therefore, be pleased to name a few newspapers, or reviews, or magazines, or any other periodicals which will *simultaneously* publish our correspondence, and in which you wish it to appear.

If you have anything to add in favour of your "creed," by way of strengthening your position, you will perceive that now, in reply to this letter of mine, is the time for you to do so.

Waiting your answer,

I remain, Reverend Sir, your obedient servant,

E. P. MEREDITH.

The Rev. John Fairfax Francklin, M. A.
Whaplode, Spalding.

Whaplode, Spalding.
3rd May, 1866.

SIR,

I must again remind you of the fact that your views and assertions, respecting the truths of Christianity, however new to you, having been so often refuted by former writers, it would have been but presumption, on my part, and, certainly lost labour, had I retrod the old and well-worn ground of controversy.

This, your cockscombry and self-vanity, I presume, has overlooked. Do not, therefore, be so very self-sufficient as to imagine that your threadbare dogmas are unanswerable, or incontrovertible.—Such is not the case, though I refrain from troubling myself further with such an individual as yourself.

I will merely add, I never purposed to convince you of your error, save by showing you to yourself, and by recommending a *little more self-examination and a little less self-conceit*, which you would do well to practise.

Publish my correspondence, if you will, and you think it will serve your purpose; I am perfectly indifferent to your proceedings in the matter.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

J. F. FRANCKLIN.

E. P. Meredith Esq. Agincourt Square, Monmouth.

Agincourt Square, Monmouth,
June 27th, 1866.

REVEREND SIR,

My various avocations have hitherto utterly prevented me from acknowledging the receipt of your communication of the 3rd of May last.

You state that what I urge against the truth of Christianity has "been so often refuted by former writers" that it would be "lost labour" for you to reproduce their arguments. But if such arguments are valid, it would have been a very easy task for you to adduce some of them, compendiously, in defence of your Creed, or, at least, to refer to them. If my "views and assertions respecting the truth of Christianity," have, as you say, "been so often refuted by former writers," so much the less was the labour left for you in finding arguments to disprove my assertions. But I am confident that all unbiassed and discriminative readers of these letters, which must now be published, will agree with me that, from the beginning to the end of this controversy, you have not produced any argument at all, either of your own or of others, and that you appear remarkably defective in power to perceive the difference between what is and what is not an argument—what is and what is not a proof of a proposition.

You write,—"I never purposed to convince you of your error," &c. This allegation, prefaced with—"I refrain from troubling myself further with such an individual as yourself," is utterly useless, now that you find truth too strong for you, and the numerous and stubborn facts I have produced in my previous letters, too dazzling for your dim vision, which has, for so many years, been weakened and impaired by the baneful mist of Christian superstition. But is your belated disavowal true? Is it a fact that you "never purposed to convince" me of my "error?" If it is, common sense would ask,—for what purpose did you write? Your answer, such as it is, appears at hand,—"For the purpose of showing to you yourself, by recommending a little more self-examination, and a little less self-conceit." Then, you adopted a very unphilosophic, immoral, and, consequently, unsuccessful mode of effecting this purpose, namely, by calling me "all manner of foul names,"—the same mode precisely as that adopted by the Founder of your Faith, for the purpose of "recommending a little more self-examination and a little less self-conceit" to the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees of old, whom he designated by a thousand opprobrious terms; and as similar causes produce similar effects, so you have been, I fear, so unsuccessful as he was, having, at his death but twelve disciples for the fruit of three years' divine preaching. But, do not your letters to me flatly contradict the assertion you now cooly make; namely, —"I never purposed to convince you of your error?" Do they not show that, before you began to feel the unfortunate position in which you had gratuitously fixed yourself, you made several attempts at being thoroughly rationalistic, and gravely argumentative? For example, in your second letter, you aim at argument, and attempt to show that Deism is surrounded with more difficulties than Christianity—that moral evil is accountable only on Christian grounds—that Deism leads to Atheism—that creation, or nature, abounds in mysteries, &c. Indeed, your letters, throughout, contradict your allegation, that you never purposed to convince me of what

you call my "error." On this point, I have only to add that I am, and always have been, fully open to conviction. I now wait for arguments. Give me proofs,—give me what my reasoning powers deem sufficient evidence of the Divine origin of Christianity, and instantly I believe. I can no more resist evidence than I can, as a thinking being, believe without, or against evidence.

Reminding you that, contrary to my request, in my last letter, you have declined to name any periodical print, through the medium of which you would wish to make public our correspondence, which must herewith close.

I remain, Reverend Sir,
Your obedient servant,
E. P. MEREDITH.

Rev. John Fairfax Francklin, M. A.
Whaplode, Spalding.

END.

Opinions of the Press, touching the First Edition of the Correspondence with the Vicar of Whaplode.

From the English Leader :—

"We have here a series of letters between the Vicar of Whaplode and Mr. Meredith, in which the former, although he commenced the correspondence, retires from the contest—we will not say of argument, for on his side there is simply none—virtually acknowledging his defeat. We have seldom met with anything more thoroughly puerile and, at the same time, offensive, than his attack upon Mr. Meredith. Personality and virulence abound, and, if 'Christianlike' be held to mean courteous or kind, scarcely ever were any effusions penned more un-Christianlike than these. Though we are far from agreeing with all Mr. Meredith's conclusions, all the argument is on his side; and, if sometimes he treats his antagonist with scant courtesy (though this is not frequently the case), he is certainly justified by the terms in which the Vicar addresses him. Amongst other things, he states that Mr. Meredith is a Pagan, and worships Nature, stocks and stones, and the whole starry host, while he (the Vicar), as a Christian, worships the God who created Nature. In answer to this, Mr. Meredith quotes from his work—*The Prophet of Nazareth*—a book, the conclusions of which, as to the character of Jesus, we do not accept, but which, in much of its criticism, as applied to the thing popularly called Christianity, is undoubtedly correct. . . . . Mr. Meredith is not a whit too hard on the popular Christianity, resting as it does on a Jewish basis; and his statement, in one of these letters, of the sort of God worshipped by those who, like the Vicar, call themselves Christians—as found described in the writings which they declare are inspired by God, and from which alone, they say, our knowledge of Him can be obtained—will enable our readers to judge of the kind of arguments brought to bear on the Vicar by Mr. Meredith. . . . . There can be no doubt on the minds of any who read this Correspondence as to which has the best of the argument. The only feeling we have is, that it is a pity Mr. Meredith did not find a worthier antagonist. And though we take exception to some of his conclusions, and the tone of some of his remarks, we quite agree with his attacks on the popular Christianity, and the God of our Theologies. The correspondence is worth perusal both by Freethinkers, and, if they did but know it, by 'Christians' too."

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"We would rather not, thank you, commit ourselves to the vortices and the bitterness of a theological discussion. If any of our readers, however, should have a taste that way, we can conscientiously assert that he will find in Mr. Meredith a champion in every respect worthy of his steel, and in Mr. Meredtih's work an amount of,

debateable matter to occupy his time, until time, in fact, shall be no more. The author enters thoroughly into the work which his hands have found to do. Believing that the Christian religion is like a goodly vineyard overgrown with thistles and weeds, he sets himself resolutely to the task of destroying the crowded undergrowth; and he handles his spade and his scarifier with much skill and noticeable pluck. . . . Now whatever may be the merits of the modern German critics, Bishop Colenso, the Essayists and Reviewers, and the other black sheep of the Church, there can be no mistake respecting the plainness of Mr. Meredith's language or the boldness of his speculations. . . . . Those who wish to continue the subject may purchase the volume for themselves. They will find Mr. Meredith always in earnest, and always gentlemanly in tone."

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[SPECIMEN PAGE OF THE WORK.]

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3

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CONSTANCE NADEN AND HYLO-IDEALISM.

THERE cannot be a doubt that Dr. Lewins, of the Army Medical Department, gave Miss Naden her mental bias. He met her first at Southport, some fifteen years ago (1876), when she was still in her teens; and I first met the Doctor some sixteen or seventeen years before, when resident in Tours.

It would be quite impossible to be long in the company of Dr. Lewins without knowing him to be a man of great originality of thought, with an excellent memory, and of very extensive reading, especially in Scotch and German philosophy as well as in Poetry. But Dr. Lewins lives for a purpose, and that purpose is to advocate his own world thought—that every individual is bounded by his own egoity, and is both his own "Be all and end all." His fulness is captivating, and his persistency irresistible.

I am by no means sure that I ever fully grasped his idea, but he always told me that Miss Naden had both mastered and asselfed it. Probably my education and habits of thought prejudiced my judgment, and shaped difficulties which the fresher mind of Miss Naden never saw. She was too young to be strongly biassed, and listened to learn rather than to dispute.

As Miss Naden herself puts it: "Philosophers set problems which poets and artists, and every-day men and women and little children, unwittingly solve. Symbol and song and healthy sensation yield a clue not always grasped by the weary metaphysician who wanders amid a crowd of ideas which have too often outgrown all resemblance to their parent facts, and of words which have forgotten their ancestry of ideas."

The seed which falls into the virgin soil of a young girl just opening into womanhood, may readily take root and flourish; but the same seed dropped into a soil choked with the cares of

this world, and hardened by self-interest, might remain sterile; or, if it springs up at all, may never prove a healthy and vigorous plant.

Be this as it may, Miss Naden was a far better disciple of Dr. Lewins than I have ever been, and not only mastered the subject, but rounded off some of its difficulties. It was Miss Naden who changed the term Hylo-zoism into Hylo-idealism, and she helped to popularise the subject by numerous contributions to different periodicals.*

In 1881 she contributed to the *Journal of Science* an article entitled "Hylo-zoism *v.* Animism";

In 1882 appeared "The Identity of Vital and Cosmical Energy"; and an article entitled "Animal Automatism";

In 1883, "The Brain Theory of Mind and Matter"; and "Paracelsus";

In 1884, "Hylo-idealism—a Defence." Here it will be observed the term Hylo-zoism is changed into Hylo-idealism. And in the same year Miss Naden contributed to *Our Corner* an article entitled "Hylo-idealism, the Creed of the Coming Day";

In 1885 she contributed to *Knowledge* "The Sentient World"; "Idealism"; and "Hylo-idealism: Does a Universe Exist exterior to Ourselves?"

And in 1887 she wrote a Preface to a series of Letters in a pamphlet by her friend Dr. Lewins.

These contributions show how earnestly the subject had interested the young and talented writer. Miss Naden herself says in a 'Prefatory Note' to her article written for Mrs. Besant, "the letters addressed to myself by Dr. Lewins, in the years 1878-1880, aided by conversation and by study of the

* *Note by Dr. Lewins.* In reality the *term* was coined by myself though the concept was her suggestion, and is already implicit in my identification of Thought with Cerebration (organic function), all such being necessarily egoistic or personal; the "impersonal" being mere vulgar realism.

exact and moral sciences [have] convinced me of the truth of his position."

The question which requires answer is what is Dr. Lewins's 'position,' which Miss Naden felt to be impregnable? I will answer what the scientific part of it seems to me to be.

Apparently, Dr. Lewins divides the universe* into two parts —the *Terra Cognita* and the *Terra Incognita.* Every individual known to man is a living museum in the Terra Cognita, and that museum with all its varied contents form what is called a separate Ego or Individuality.

All that may by hypothesis be supposed to belong to the Terra Incognita is a sealed book, wholly unknown to man; and this region, with its unknown contents, is called the Non-ego.

In the Terra Cognita there is no Non-ego, and in the Terra Incognita no Ego. But it is quite possible for an avatar to proceed from the Terra Incognita to the Terra Cognita, and *vice versâ,* certain factors of the Ego may pass out of knowledge, and get buried in the great Unknown.

Thus, since telescopes and microscopes were used, thousands and tens of thousands of far-off worlds, and countless myriads of protozoa, too small to be discerned by the naked eye, have made their advents from the Terra Incognita to the now well-known world. While they were unknown they belonged to the Non-ego class, now they are known they are naturalised denizens of the Ego world. So again, both in life and death, there are parts of what we call 'us,' which go no one knows whither; and therefore fly away, like the swallows in the fall of the year, to the Land Unknown. They pass from the Ego to the Non-ego.†

* In Hylo-idealism there is no universe outside the Universal Idea or Thought. Its formula in this aspect, is *L'Univers c'est Moi.*—R. L.

† I do not find so far as I understand it, this division into two worlds—a Known and Unknown one—compatible with the strict monocosm of Hylo-idealism.—R. L.

So far the scheme is simple enough for anyone to follow, but we must now come to the Ego, and see how Dr. Lewins disposes of that difficult problem.

According to the author of this synthesis, as I understand him, every separate individual is a sort of living museum, and each museum with its varied contents forms a separate Ego. The stores vary with each individual according to circumstances: one will contain many articles and another fewer; but whatever the collection, be it more or less, each museum with its stores forms a distinct Ego. The museum is the substance, the stores are all that any individual knows or thinks he knows.

So far there can be no possible difficulty in following out our subject; but we must now approach the Hylo-idealistic Ego, or the relation between man and what is usually called the objective world.

As there is no Non-ego in the Ego, it follows of necessity that what is usually called the Objective World is not objective, but to each individual subjective only, so far as he knows it; and what he knows not of it belongs, as far as he himself is concerned, to the Non-ego of the Unknown World.*

We see not *without* but *within* ourselves; we hear not the sounds dispersed in air, but only those which enter our own auditorium. And so with smell, or any other sense-object,—it must become an inmate, and be converted into a subjective idea, before we can even discern it.

If our organs of sense and imagination were removed, whatever the world may be to others, to us it would be a dead blank. Take away the five doors of knowledge, and man is an isolated being, a mere shell or *caput mortuum*, cut off from all the world,—an empty sepulchre, no better than an automaton of Vaucanson of Grenoble or the eagle of the German Regiomontanus.

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* With which "Unknown World" we have no concern whatever.—R. L.

If this is the case, every man's world is within his own *cerebrum*, and is there moulded and fashioned before it can be cognized. We see not and know not the world without, but only the world photographed on our own brain. It may appear to be without, but this is a similar delusion to a reflexion in water or in a mirror. The mirror may be only the eighth of an inch thick, but may give a reflexion of many feet or yards apparently behind the glass and in front of the spectator. The picture is made by the mirror, and characterised by the mirror. It may be distorted, broken, multiplied; of fair proportions or the reverse. Whatever the object, the glass gives it its form and pressure, and every mirror preserves its own rôle.

So with the brain and the objective world. Man knows nothing of the objective world. It must be made subjective before he can know anything about it. He sees not the world *without* him, but only the world presented to him by the mirror of his own mind, each individual brain being a separate and several mirror. So that, in fact, there are as many worlds as there are individual brains, and no two worlds are precisely alike.

Now, if everything must be asselfed, and converted into thought before it can be cognized, it follows, as a matter of course, that everything cognized is a part of our Ego. Every man, in a *relative* sense, the absolute being beyond him—manufactures his own world, and that world is smaller or bigger, according to the measure of his knowledge. Every man may say truthfully with Alexander Selkirk, "I am monarch of all I survey,"* inasmuch as all that he surveys is in himself, a part and parcel of his own egoity.

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* *Pur*vey were a more exact term. Coleridge puts it well in the fine lines :—

"We receive but what we give,
And in *our* life alone does Nature live ;
Ours is her wedding garment, *ours* her shroud."—R. L.

This I think is a rough outline of Hylo-idealism without its lemmas and deductions, which cannot be introduced into this essay. Its speciality is the ignoring of the Non-ego. "The world," says G. H. Lewes, in his *Problems of Life and Mind*, "is to each man as it affects him. To each a different world. Fifty spectators see fifty different rainbows, and all believe they see the same one. Nor is this unanimity delusive for 'the same,' [in this case] means...similarity in their states of consciousness;" but the "consciousness" is a *sine quâ non*, and consciousness certainly is part of ourselves; that, at least, cannot belong to the Non-ego of an exterior world.

No illustration runs quite on all fours, but perhaps a pretty correct idea of what is meant by the foregoing may be gained from a camera obscura. Everything must be thrown into the camera before the sensitive plate can record it. Call the camera the individual, and the sensitive plate the brain. So far as the camera obscura is concerned, whatever is photographed must first be asselfed or made part of the sensitive plate; and before the mind can cognize any object, that object must be thrown into the mind, and impressed on the brain. If two or more plates are exactly alike, the photographs will very minutely resemble each other; if not, they will differ more or less, and in some cases be almost unrecognisable.

Of course, this does not touch the question whether or not, independent of ourselves, there is an objective world. That is quite a separate question. It only determines that so far as you, or I, or any other individual, is concerned there is no such thing as the Non-ego; for all that anyone can possibly cognize must first be asselfed, or made part of his Ego; as all things to be photographed must first be taken into the camera obscura, before the sensitive plate can take any notice of them.

Miss Naden, speaking on this subject, makes an objector say, "Each man's mind, Ego or personality, is peculiar to himself. It is his inalienable heritage...If [however] the Ego

be encompassed by impregnable barriers, if between man and man there is a great gulf fixed, which none can pass over; how can the common earth and sky, which belong to the whole human race, be an integral part of any individual mind? These, one would think, must be outside not inside... They yield their meaning not to one pair of eyes and ears, but to all who have hearing and vision. We all see the same sun, stars, and flowers; we all hear the same thunder and the same music. How else were conversation possible? How else could we carry on the ordinary business of life?"

That is the question of the supposed objector, and this is Miss Naden's answer:

"Science says You are wrong. No two persons ever see the same sun; and no one person sees the same sun for two minutes or two seconds together. There are as many suns as human beings, and as many earths as brains. *Quot mentes tot mundi.*"

This is quite true so far as the latter part of the objection is concerned, but it is no answer to the main question. It does not matter a jot if, on looking at the rainbow, "your eye," as Miss Naden says, "receives one set of light waves, while a friend half a head taller receives from the same source quite a different set of waves, corresponding to a different colour." The question to be answered is this: Not if two persons see the same phase of the sun, but whether they see the sun at all. Not whether the shorter man sees the same identical rays as the taller man, but whether the rays which reach them both come from the same rainbow; or, in other words, whether, if the sun and rainbow were not in the heavens, outside the spectators, they would see any phase of the one, or colours of the other.*

Miss Naden does not deny the existence of an objective world, how could she? She might with the same consistency

* On the hylo-ideal hypothesis nothing can be outside the Mind, rigid Auto-Monism being its Ideal.—R. L.

deny the existence of a fourth dimension. What is unknown and unknowable she does not pretend to explain. All that Miss Naden affirms is this: Whatever we see or hear, know or think we know, is in the brain; and the whole universe is only an idea, so far as we can possibly judge.

Dr. Johnson kicked a stone, and asked if that were not an object outside of himself? What could he mean? If that he *saw* the stone, undoubtedly he saw it only on the retina of his eye; if that he *felt* the resistance of the stone, that feeling was in his own nerves. And if he had neither eyes nor feeling, he would have known nothing whatever of the stone, kicked he ever so hard.

Dr. Johnson had a sort of *ad captandum* cleverness which passed for wit, but much that he said might be bottled with Astolfo's brains and left in the limbo of the Moon.

But, to return, in a telegraphic communication the report of clock B is not the *ipsissima* message of clock A, but only a more or less perfect interpretation thereof; yet clock B could make no report at all unless operated upon by something exterior to itself. Miss Naden says, "If you glance at the pavement underfoot and the sun overhead you have practically a report of the present state of the one, and a report of what the other was 8¼ minutes ago. Jupiter takes 20 minutes to send his dispatches, and Sirius more than 20 years."

Just so, and it is supposable,* at least, that some stars may be extinct before the telegram of their once existence reaches our earth, so that we are seeing what does not even exist.

This again does not seem to me to touch the objection started by Miss Naden. It is no disproof of objective phenomena to say their telegrams are not simultaneous, or

* But all suppositions are like all "things" else, engendered by some brain. All scientific discovery and invention is; till so engendered they are non-existent.—R. L.

are so long in coming that the objects had ceased to exist before they reached us. The spectator could not cognize them till their messages arrived, and even then he only received a telegram and not the *res ipsissimæ*. The objects, however, must have existed, or no messenger could have been sent from their courts.

Dr. Lewins's position stands unshaken, but not the argument of Miss Naden.* Dr. Lewins says there is no such thing as a Non-ego in the range of man's knowledge, for the instant it enters into man's knowledge it becomes part and parcel of his ego; so that man is a microcosm, in which is arked all the universe, so far as he knows it; and whatever is not so asselfed and reduced to thought, to him has no existence. Each man is a separate microcosm, yet any number of individuals may share and share alike.

The very word Hylo-idealism implies this much. The *hylo* is the original object or stimulus, the *idealism* is the reduction of the thing into a 'think.' Of the original *hylo* or thing we know nothing; all we can possibly know is its ideality, a mental perception, more or less perfect, read from the writings on our own brain-plates.

One might suppose from the loose way of speaking of those who oppose the Hylo-idealistic theory, that Dr. Lewins teaches that the whole universe is carted bodily into our brains,—that towns and nations, forests and trees, the multitudinous ocean and all the host of heaven are trundled bodily from their native localities and tossed into the minds of each individual who cognizes them. This is too absurd to need answer. Dr. Lewins does not teach that the mind is full of houses and trees, suns and moons, mountains and seas,—but that these and everything else must be converted into subjective "thinks" before the mind can take knowledge

* I find no fallacy in Miss Naden's argument any more than in my own "original position."—R. L.

of them; and all we know, or can by any possibility know about them, is only the tale told by our own brain.

That they "yield their meaning not to one pair of eyes but many" is no difficulty at all, for the same may be said of cameras and mirrors.* With *objects* Dr. Lewins has no concern. They are wholly unknowable. They may or may not exist. All that man can know must be wholly subjective. Not things but "thinks." And Dr. Lewins does not trouble himself to pretend to explain what is physically impossible for any man to know. Let Dr. Lewins speak for himself.

"Hylo-idealism, which deals alone with the relative, ignoring the absolute as utterly beyond human *gnosis*, in no sense denies the so-called objective; but only contends for identity of object and subject," so far as cognizance is concerned. Let there be an objective sun, and objective trees,—all that man can know about them is a subjective sun, and subjective trees. The objective must be converted into the subjective, or must remain unknown. For myself, I do not like the word "identity" in this connection, because by no possibility can a "think" be identical with a "thing," or *vice versâ*. One may represent the other, one may be converted into the other, or the two may be amalgamated, but this, in no case, would be "identity." Till the conversion or amalgamation, or substitution has taken place, the object, whatever it may be, is a stranger in the region of the Non-ego or Terra Incognita, not yet having made its advent into our mind, or come within our knowledge, and *de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*.†

Dr. Lewins evidently recognizes an intermediate region between the Terra Incognita and the Terra Cognita, although he does not, to the best of my knowledge, distinctly state

* A better reason is the substantial morphological identity of each *human* cerebro-spinal centre and axis.—R. L.

† I do not see any force in these objections.—R. L.

the fact in any of his writings. In this intermediate state float all those "phenomena" at present unknown to any individual, but which are waiting to emigrate from his Non-ego to his Ego,—such, for example, as the revelations made from time to time by science, as those of geology, chemistry, and astronomy.* These avatars from the Land Unknown are on the road to human knowledge, and to some are known; but till they have reached the coast of Ego, are a sort of *Tertium Quid* to those who have not yet taken the strangers in.

I think Dr. Lewins sometimes calls these "intermediaries" *Non-ego*,† but I prefer to speak of them as a *Tertium Quid*, between the known and unknown, because they are known to some but not to the general, and are quite ready to enter into the *gnosis* of all. The Non-ego I would restrict to those hypothetical quiddites which no man knows anything about; no, not so much as whether they exist or not.

If I mention to a boy some sesquipedalian word he never heard before, he looks at me with blank unintelligence. He can form no idea of what the word means. The subject has not yet entered into his Ego. Well, I explain the word. I state to what kingdom it belongs—animal, vegetable, or mineral; I draw a picture of it; I describe its habits; I classify it into some known genus and species; and the boy grasps the new idea, asselfs it, and it becomes part of his store of knowledge. Now, it would be just as absurd to ask Dr. Lewins to define and explain any object not made subjective to him, as to ask the boy the meaning of a word which he never heard before. The Doctor, like the boy, must first learn his lesson, and then can only know what he has

* Here Dr. Brewer characteristically ignores Biology or the science of life proper, though the main-stay of the theorem involved.—R. L.

† No intermediaries are allowable in Hylo-idealism between Brain and Thought, differing thus *in toto* from the "intentional species, &c." of John Locke.—R. L.

learned. His knowledge is wholly limited to what he apprehends. It may be right, it may be wrong, no matter. The witch or fairy believed in is as real to the believer as the revelations of the telescope or microscope to the scientist. The truth or untruth of the "think" cannot in the least affect its "reality." Its reality is the thought, and that thought is only subjective. Of the object itself he cannot form the remotest idea, because no object can possibly intrude into his brain. Our only world is the world of our own thoughts, no more.

The ancients believed the earth to be a flat surface surrounded by the horizon on its four sides, and roofed by a ceiling of clouds—that is all scientifically wrong, but was as true to them as the more modern theory of Copernicus is to you and me. Their earth was what they believed it to be, and so is ours. It was a "think," and that is all.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this part of the subject, because many imagine it to be the pinching point of the system, and some that it wrecks it altogether. Dr. Lewins is pressed to state categorically whether or not he believes in an outside world,—whether or not he believes that the stone kicked by Dr. Johnson was *intra* or *extra*; and he replies, very properly, I can only believe what I think. He is asked again what are the multitude of objects all around, above our head and under our feet? He replies they are what we *see*, and that which we see we see in our own cerebrum. Being driven still furthur, he is asked if he believes the thoughts of his brain are identical with the objects around? He can only reply: Of the unknown I can predicate nothing. Put the object or objects into my brain so that it can asself them, and I will answer your question; but till then all I can say is I can recognize no other universe than that of my own thoughts.

The boy referred to above would answer in the same way,

and answer rightly. I ask him about the pterodactyl, and he says, What is that? I never so much as heard the word before. I then ask him whether it is fish or fowl, flesh or good red herring? He replies how can I tell? for I know nothing about the matter. Still further pressed by the question whether or not it is like anything he knows about, he can only answer I cannot tell, because I have not the most remote idea what the word means. Tell me what is meant, and if I understand what you say, and believe it, I will answer your question. That is, when he has asselfed the subject he will tell me what he has asselfed. It will only be a "think," and there the matter ends.*

As an axiom it may be stated in the words of Cardinal Newman, "There is no ultimate test of truth besides the testimony borne to truth by the mind itself;" or in the words of Miss Naden: "The whole universe of things and thought is [to each individual] only an *automorphosis;* each Ego being to itself, as Protagoras postulated, the measure and standard of all existing things, of all thought and objects of thought."

Miss Naden, following the footsteps of her friend and teacher, says quite correctly: "Paralyse the brain, and you paralyse the intellect; intoxicate the brain with opium, and you create within it a wondrous new heaven and new earth; make the brain dead drunk, and you degrade the inner deity to the lowest of brutes." By stimulating certain parts of the brain of a dog or monkey, you can produce movements of the limbs such as are usually the sequence of volition. Electricity plays the role of will. We thus have evidence that physical forces can direct and modify thought, imagination,

* What I term a "think" is named by Bishop Berkeley "the idea of a thing,"—a position so contemptuously rejected by Dean Swift, Bishop Warburton, and other "downright" realists. The late Mr. Bradlaugh rejected Hylo-idealism, though yielding a *scientific* basis and formula for his own, more or less empiric, atheism.– R. L.

action. We have no evidence whatsoever that there is any other kind of force which gives like results.

"Reasoning from analogy, we may justly conclude that thought, imagination, action, are normally directed and modified by physical forces. The God within is simply the energy stored up in the thought cells; and this energy is no separable spiritual being, but [only] a specialised form of that cosmic vitality, or *vis insita*, which is inherent in matter. The plant wins its life from earth, air, and water, which, in ordinary parlance, are not alive; [and] yields that life to nourish the tissues of thinking and feeling man (animals). Some goes to feed the muscles, and is consumed in muscular work; some goes to enrich the blood, and to form the various secretions; some goes to renew the brain, and is burnt up in cerebration. The circle from inorganic to organic, and back again—from death to life, and from life to death—is never interrupted.

"Here comes, says Miss Naden, the most critical point of the enquiry: If the Universe be simply a more or less coherent vision; ...how are we to know that there is any such thing as Matter? ...how are we to be sure that the brain itself exists, and that the all-generating cells are not mere illusory appearances?" Here stop a moment. Dr. Lewins does not say that the Universe is only a vision,* but only a photograph, or telegraphic message sent from the unknown without; and that all we know of that "unknown without" is copy stereotyped on our brain. There *is* a without, but it belongs to another firm. There are two clocks, one at a distance, and one at home. They are in constant correspondence, but all we know anything about is the tell-tale of our own clock. The word "vision" does not correctly represent the

* Yes, he does, viz. :—A phenomenon or apparition. This is the real present standpoint of Science, which treats of phenomena as the only accessible realities.—R. L.

idea. A photograph is not the original, but it is no vision.* The furthest from it possible. It is a reality from a reality. Not the real or original reality, but nevertheless an abiding witness thereof. Man knows nothing of the original, because it is in some far country quite inaccessible; but he knows the copy which he keeps at home, and he presumes it to be pretty correct, because millions untold have similar copies, and they fairly coincide with each other.

The true question should have been put thus: If all we know of the Universe is what our senses have asselfed, how can we be sure that the brain itself exists? And the answer is obvious: the brain could not asself, if it did not exist. The fact that it gives a report proves its existence. It may be a cracked mirror, a distorting mirror, a badly made mirror, but it gives some sort of reflection, and therefore exists.

Miss Naden talks of "Matter...How are we to know that there is any such thing as Matter?" But we ought to have been told what is meant by Matter. If the stuff of which things are made [*materies*] well and good; but if what is ordinarily understood by the word; that is, a multiple of indivisible atoms, I must confess myself wholly unable to grasp the idea. Euclid tells us that a point has no dimensions, a line only one, a superficies two, and a solid three; but this is simply definition. He does not say that a line is a multiple of points, or a superficies a multiple of lines. If an atom is a mathematical point, without dimensions, no multiple of atoms can make a solid. It is possible to talk of a solid reduced so far as to have neither length, breadth nor thickness, but it is wholly impossible to conceive of such a thing as a real entity.†

* Surely yes. Still this distinction between idea, vision, photograph, &c., I find quite beside the question.—R. L.

† I find no bearing whatever in these remarks on the truth of Hylo-idealism. In the biological sciences Mathesis is quite out of court, supplanted by Logic.

Miss Naden goes on to say: that Hylo-idealism may be called by those without "the gospel of selfishness,"* but adds, "Self, in common parlance, signifies a little private enclosure, jealousy walled around; in philosophical language, it is co-extensive with the cosmos. Every man his own universe." This, without doubt, is Dr. Lewins's standpoint. His alpha and omega is the practical annihilation of the Non-ego, by its absorption into the Ego the instant it comes into the field of man's cognizance. Dr. Lewins is not so illogical as to deny the Unknowable. Every positive must of necessity have its negative or opposite—to truth falsehood, to honesty dishonesty, to known unknown, and so on through the whole gamut. All Dr. Lewins affirms is, that the unknown, so long as it remains unknown is unknown; and if unknowable, can never enter into the field of the known. That which is known becomes by that very fact a part of man's Ego, where it is moulded and fashioned by the idiosyncrasy which constitutes man's individuality. Even deity and revelation form no exception to this universal rule, and hence the thousand-and-one sects, the multitude of religions, and the numberless interpretations even of what is called divine revelation; for being cognised and then made part of ourselves, its 'thinks' become our own thoughts, and always smell of the cask. Each recipient of the idea fashions it in his own mould, and then believes what he believes he believes. If, however, deity and revelation were a rigid *A-per-se*, and fell presumably into the human mind, they would remain alone, not mixing with man's thought, nor forming alliances with man's nature. This is incontrovertible, for an *A-per-se* cannot possibly become an *A-cum-multis-aliis*.

Dr. R. W. Dale in an article entitled "Constance Naden," in the *Contemporary Review*, of April, 1891, says: "The philosophical creed which, under Dr. Lewins's teaching, Miss

* Selfism, not selfishness, is its true connotation. Egoism, not Egotism.—R. L.

Naden accepted, is called Hylo-idealism...but I have been unable to think myself into the position of an Hylo-idealist... The theory begins...on familiar ground: Its first position is that we have no knowledge of the thing as it is; that all our knowledge is relative. Its second position is also well known to all students of philosophy; it assumes that, if all knowledge is *relative*, all knowledge is purely *subjective;* forgetting that a relation is the synthesis of two terms, and that if either of the terms is suppressed, there is no relation. Our universe, says Miss Naden, is made up of sensations...and beyond sensation we cannot pass."

In this quotation some little obscurity is introduced by the word sensation, which means here offspring of the senses.* Our only doors of knowledge are the senses, and all we know of the Universe must have entered by one of these doors. And when it is said that all our knowledge is relative, Miss Naden means it is not absolute, not unconnected with our egoity. It is part of ourselves, in ourselves, and therefore subjective; not out of our egoity, or objective. Miss Naden, being impressed with the idea of the Ego and its contrary the Non-ego, says virtually, "Our universe is part of our Ego, because our knowledge thereof is acquired by the senses; and, being so acquired, becomes part and parcel of ourselves." It is not apart from our Ego,—not in the enemy's camp call Non-ego,—but one of our allies; so that Dr. Dale's remark that "a relation is the synthesis of two terms" has no bearing on the subject. The quotation given by Dr. Dale from Miss Naden's Essay, called "Induction and Deduction," is this: "Practically we may say of self...In it are all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth,—things visible and things invisible,—whether

* But sensation includes not only the five special senses, but general sensation and thought as well, being indistinguishable from, and synonymous with, consciousness. All the senses are modes of tact or touch.—R. L.

thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers;—all things have been created through it, and unto it; and self is before all things; and in self all things consist." The only word objectionable in this paragraph is the word "created"—made out of nothing—which should have been sensated or rendered by our senses subjective.* Man does not create his universe, or it would be absolute and not relative at all; and it would give man the power of producing something out of nothing, which is not Dr. Lewins's idea, *me judice.* Perhaps "differentiates" would better express the Doctor's meaning: Every man differentiates his idea of the Universe according to the texture of his own mind—one man's mind may be tinctured with Otto of Roses, another with asafœtida, one with honey and another with gall, and whatever is cast into these vessels *testam olebit.* That is how I understand the quotation.†

Dr. Dale, continuing the same remark, tells us in a note to one of Miss Naden's essays, [contained in the same volume], "Dr. Lewins gives his own account of the theory. He says that when Napoleon, on his way to Egypt, objected to the materialism of modern science by pointing to the stars, and asking, 'Who made all that?' the answer of his *savans* was probably 'No one, they are eternal.' But Dr. Lewins thinks the true answer would have been 'Yourself.' What you see is ...only an organic function of your own *sensifacient* organism."‡

This answer is quite consistent from Dr. Lewins' standpoint. What we see we see in ourselves, not out of ourselves. As Miss Naden said "all our knowledge is relative," and

* I find this objection hypercritical. The brain *does* create or generate its own imagery.—R. L.

† This reading I cannot accept. My meaning is that all we can see is brain-born. It is only Kant's negation of *Thing in itself*, which leaves, as the only alternative, *Thing in myself*, with the Materialism more clearly developed than seems practicable in Metaphysics.—R. L.

‡ Strong evidence in support of Individualism supplied by the morphology of the eye, in the fact, that the rods and cones of the retina—the essential factors in vision—face inwards towards the bottom of the organ, not outwards towards the *pseudo*-outer light.—R. L.

therefore cannot be disconnected with ourselves. We must sensate before we can ever know or see anything, and what we see we see in our own camera obscura—the head. Of course, the eye does not see the object looked at, but only its reflection on the optic nerves, telegraphed to the brain. So that in this sense every one makes his own universe; or else the non-ego must be absolutely separate from the ego, and yet in relative union with it—an obvious contradiction.*

Dr. Dale in his concluding remarks says: "In her philosophical expositions, ...Miss Naden shows acuteness and a charming lightness of touch. Her style is singularly graceful and clear, and her illustrations felicitous....

"I called upon her a few days after her grandmother's death, [and she] then told me how great a change had passed upon her whole conception of human life and destiny. My little 'Consie'...had faced the eternal problem of human thought... The heavens and the earth, truth and beauty, the awful contrasts between right and wrong, and the glory of the Supreme, [all these] she had come to think...are the creations of the grey thought cells of the cerebral hemispheres."

I do not think that Dr. Dale fully understood the young philosopher. Perhaps the indefiniteness of the words with which she tried to make her subject clear was in some measure at fault; but I do not believe Miss Naden meant that heaven and earth, truth and beauty, right and wrong, creator and creation, were sickly dreams, the mere imaginings of the mind.† She speaks of the "stimulus of thought," the

* Here Dr. Brewer conflicts with what he asserts above as to "Creation." For to make a world or create it is identical.—R. L.

† She certainly did not consider truth and beauty as sickly dreams. But Creator and Creation she necessarily held to be the mere provisional "imaginings of the [human] mind." Dr. Dale's gloss is certainly a misconception; Miss Naden's point being that all each self sees or feels is the product, or eject, of the grey thought cells of the supreme cerebral ganglia. This point is only an extension of Shakespeare's: "There is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so," or of Luther and Cardinal Newman's "Private Judgment."—R. L.

something which generates it, and this being given or planted in the mind, its form and pressure must depend on "the grey thought-cells of the cerebral hemispheres," for they may be changed at will by the surgeon's knife.

Dr. Aitken tells us, in his *Science and Art of Medicine*, that slicing the hemispherical ganglia of the cerebrum has no other effect than to make the victim of the vivisector stupid or demented; or, in other words, to take away its mind, *i.e.* its power of will and ideation. You can remove, without death supervening, the whole brain proper from animals so high in the scale as cocks and hens; and they eat, drink, and get fat,—only their mind is quite gone. They are pure machines, and seem to have no will, or desire, or thought; just like men under the influence of narcotics: as for instance, Nepenthe, so graphically described in Homer's Odyssey (book IV, verse 301, &c.)

To this quotation Dr. Lewins adds from Bishop Berkeley's "Principles of Human Knowledge." "Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind, that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be,—that all the choir of heaven and furniture of earth—in a word, all those bodies which compose this mighty frame of the world, have not any substance without a mind." Which Dr. Lewins explains to be this: "that we perceive nothing but our own perceptions." Just so. Till our senses have made them subjective, to us they are virtually non-existent.

Dr. Lewins continuing his exposition (2 January, 1879) says to Miss Naden: "Just realise the idea, the feeling, or vision, that you are one with all the objects of sensation and thought to the furthest confines of the starry heavens, millions and quadrillions of times beyond the range of the telescope, wherever light and motion ... exist; and the whole problem that has maddened ... the race of man is ... solved. It is a solution sublime beyond the ... dreams of poetry and

philosophy." Here the doctor most distinctly recognizes a "starry heaven" and an existing world, a non-ego till it has entered the realm of our Ego,* and then we are one together—heaven and earth, the fields of imagination, subject and object, all that is and all we think there is, all is one Ego. We do not create this mighty store out of nothing, but we asself it, and give it "a local habitation and a name." I am quite prepared to echo the quotation "truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made." It is wonderful beyond the range of words that this little organism, called man, should yet be a sensitive camera upon whose brain is writ all that eye can see, or mind conceive; all that is, and all that is supposed to be, a macrocosm of a vast microcosm without beginning and without end. Yet so it is, for man's Ego is all this.†

I was not asked to write a Memoir of Miss Naden, others who knew her well have done that. All I have been asked to do is to show how far this rare youthful Englishwoman was a faithful exponent of Hylo-idealism, as I myself read the subject. Probably I have been but a halting interpreter, but I have known Dr. Lewins for more than thirty years, sometimes as travelling companion, sometimes as an intimate friend, and sometimes as a frequent correspondent. He well knows that we do not at all times see eye to eye. I do not

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* Both Miss Naden and myself everywhere contest Kant's dualism in separating the motions of the celestial bodies from those of his own mind—the former for us having no *locus standi* till merged in the latter.—R. L.

† And yet it is only common sense and commonplace reality that all man sees, or can possibly see (percept and concept alike)—in all senses of the term—is but the project of the Self. Fact is indeed stranger than all fiction, both of which, however, being alike issues of the vesiculo-neurine. A dream and waking reality only differ in the condition of the Brain. In the dream there is less than normal circulation, through it, of arterial blood. A Brain not properly supplied throughout with that *pabulum vitae* is thus a dream-land. And that, as yet, is the state of the vast majority of our race, and especially of specialists. See Miss Naden's poem, *The Pilgrim*, at page 39 of "Songs and Sonnets of Springtime."—R. L.

pretend to be an Hylo-idealist, but I have studied the subject; and perhaps, next to Miss Naden, know more of Dr. Lewins as a scholar and a thinker than any other person.

It must, however, be distinctly understood that I do not pledge Dr. Lewins to any statement here made, nor do I pledge myself to be one in thought with him throughout. This perfect unity was not essential for the work allotted me. All I undertake to do is to write a short article on Miss Naden as an expositor of Hylo-idealism, of course as I myself understand the subject. Her talent is undoubted, her sincerity none can gainsay, her singleness of mind was beautiful in the extreme. Whatever her creed she "let her light so shine before men that they saw her good works." Mrs. Daniell, who had travelled with her, and lived with her, tells us "All her thoughts were noble and generous. The smallest evasion was a difficulty, and any approach to untruth in any shape was an utter impossibility." Such talent, backed with such truthfulness, is a splendid Letter of Recommendation to Hylo-idealism.

Miss Naden was young for a philosopher, but had all the stuff out of which philosophers are made. She shone on earth for only a few brief years, and passed away before the morning dew of her glory had felt the chilling touch of an unsympathetic and un-ideal world.

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THE PRINCIPLES

OF

MODERN PANTHEISTIC

AND

ATHEISTIC PHILOSOPHY,

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE LAST WORKS OF STRAUSS AND OTHERS.

BY

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THE PRINCIPLES

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MODERN PANTHEISTIC AND ATHEISTIC PHILOSOPHY.

THE following passage from the *Autobiography of the late Mr. J. S. Mill* demands the earnest attention of all those who believe that there is a personal God, who is the moral governor of the universe: "The world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its brightest ornaments—of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue—are complete sceptics on religion, many of them refraining from avowal, less from personal considerations, than from a conscientious, though now in my opinion most mistaken apprehension, lest by speaking out what may tend to weaken existing beliefs, and by consequence, as they suppose, existing restraints, they should do harm rather than good."

2. The first question which strikes the mind on reading this passage is, is the assertion true, "that a large proportion of the 'world's brightest ornaments' are complete sceptics on religion"? If so, it is of the most serious import. Mr. Mill has probably exerted a greater influence in the higher regions of thought than any writer of the existing generation. No holder of his philosophy can any longer entertain a doubt that certain portions of it are the philosophy of scepticism. The peculiar idiosyncrasies of mind which the Autobiography discloses, may have led Mr. Mill somewhat to over-estimate the sceptical tendencies of others. Yet the large number of writings, which have been recently published, of a similar tendency, is a sufficiently clear evidence that the principles of a pantheistic or atheistic philosophy are widely diffused among cultivated minds. Strauss, in his recent work, distinctly affirms that he is only acting as the spokesman of a wide range of pantheistic thought.

3. I quite concur with Mr. Mill in opinion, that the time is come for speaking out plainly. In fact, unless morality is nothing better than expediency, there never has been a time when it has been right to profess adhesion to a system of thought, which in secret we utterly despise. I fully concede that theologians no less than philosophers would do well to act

on this opinion, and not to have an exoteric doctrine for the vulgar, and an esoteric one for themselves. But it is with the latter that I am now dealing. A sound philosophy requires, that the too frequent example of the ancient philosopher, who acted the part of the high priest of the god whose moral character he despised, and whose existence he disbelieved, should be utterly repudiated. What can be more degrading than the spectacle of an atheist Cæsar, dressed in the pontifical robes, uttering solemn vows to Jupiter in the Capitol? Persons capable of acting such a part must have a supreme contempt for the vulgar herd of humanity; and are at one in principle with the priests whose conduct they denounce. It is satisfactory to be informed that in the opinion of Mr. J. S. Mill, his father's prudential principle of not avowing his opinions to the world "was attended with *some* moral disadvantages." The italics are ours; in place of "some" we would read "great."

4. Before entering on the consideration of some of the principles of pantheistic and atheistic philosophy, to which I propose drawing attention in the present paper, it will be necessary to state what Atheism, as held by men of culture, really means. The son's account of the character of his father's atheism will clearly define its nature. "Finding," says Mr. J. S. Mill, "no halting-place in Theism, he yielded to the conviction, that concerning the origin of things nothing whatever can be known. This is the only correct statement of his opinion, for dogmatic Atheism he looked on as absurd, as most of those whom the world have considered atheists have always done." Atheism, therefore, as a philosophic theory, does not consist in the denial of the being of a God, but in the affirmation that there is no evidence that there is one. The moral value of the distinction between these two positions is *nil*, but the intellectual one is great, for it frees him who entertains it from the necessity of proving a negative.

5. The following is worthy of quotation, as an illustration of the nature of the elder Mill's atheistic reasonings. "He impressed upon me from the first that the manner in which the world came into existence was a subject about which nothing was known; that the question, 'Who made me?' cannot be answered, because we have no experience or authentic information from which to answer it; and that the answer only throws the difficulty a step further back, since the question immediately presents itself, 'Who made God?'" It is almost incredible that such reasoning could have commended itself as valid to a man of the mental acuteness of the elder Mill; and it is

quite a relief to be informed by the son that his father's atheism was rather moral than intellectual.

6. I now proceed to examine some of the philosophic principles on which modern Pantheism and Atheism are based; and, first, their principle of causation. It is an accepted dogma of the Positive philosophy that a cause is nothing but an invariable sequence between an antecedent and a consequent, and that the notion of any efficiency in the cause to produce its effect is a fancy which has been exploded by the discoveries of physical science. This opinion is the natural outcome of a philosophy which teaches that the whole of objective nature, and even the fundamental principles of the mind, are nothing else but a bare succession of phenomena; and that a knowledge of any truth objectively valid for all time and space is unattainable by man.

7. It strikes one at first sight as a strong objection against such a system of philosophy that language has been formed on the assumption that it is not true. Its forms embody the universal experience of mankind, and have grown out of that experience. Now, nothing is more certain than that whenever we use words denoting causation we mean by them something very different from the mere invariable following of a consequent on an antecedent. If this is the true idea of a cause, nothing is more misleading than human language; for it is impossible to express the conceptions of this philosophy in it except by using it in a non-natural sense. One of the first duties which it owes to truth is to revolutionize human language, for, in its present forms, it is incapable of being the vehicle of accurate thought. If, therefore, this philosophy is a true representation of ultimate realities, one of its first duties is to attempt to construct a language capable of expressing them. At present it is a strong argument against the truth of this system of philosophy, that a few philosophers are committed to a particular theory on the one side; and, on the contrary, is the universal experience of mankind, as testified by the fundamental structure and the forms of language.

8. This philosophy also carries out to its utmost limits the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge. Of this Mr. Mill is one of the strongest advocates; he even considers it possible that in some distant region of the universe, two and two may make five. Beyond this, it seems impossible to push the doctrine in question. Such an affirmation is a strange one to be made by a philosophy, which professes to ground all human knowledge on experience, for it certainly transcends all experience. Next, it is directly contradictory to the principles of at least one science. Astronomy has penetrated into regions of the universe immeasurably

remote. Its calculations are based on the assumption that in the remotest regions two and two make four; and if any region existed in which they did not make four but five, the whole of its apparatus of calculation would be subverted. Next, the assertion that two and two make four and not five, is a truth self-evident to the mind as soon as it is capable of comprehending the terms. It is marvellous that any man should have made such a statement. What is two? 1 + 1. What is four? 1 + 1 + 1 + 1. What is five? 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1. It is therefore evident that the proposition 2+2, *i. e.* (1+1)+(1+1) must make 4, *i.e.* 1 + 1 + 1 + 1, and not five, *i.e.* 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1, must be valid for all thought, all space, and all time, and that to affirm the contrary is to assert the possibility of contradictions being true. It follows, therefore, that all our knowledge is not relative.

9. If all our knowledge is only relative and phenomenal, on what does our belief in the existence of an external universe rest? It will be answered, on experience. But what renders such experience valid? How do we know that any sensation or mental conception has anything to correspond to it outside our minds? This cannot be the result of experience alone, for all that we are actually cognizant of are certain mental states. Yet our belief in the reality of an external world is so strong, that it cannot be shaken by any amount of reasoning. Moreover, it is no mere result of a balance of probabilities, but it is a firm and ultimate persuasion, on which it is impossible to avoid acting. If the alternative of idealism or materialism were presented to our minds as a matter of abstract reasoning, the balance of the evidence would turn in favour of idealism. Still we cannot help believing in the reality of an external world, and we shall continue to do so despite of all philosophy.

10. To say that this belief is derived from experience is to beg the question at issue, because there must be something to give validity to the primary experience; and which has enabled us to infer from some primary act of sensation, the externality of the cause producing it. The only possible account of our belief is, that there must be some principle in the mind (be it what it may) independent of sensation, which compels us to believe in the externality of the cause producing it. This power may be called into activity by an act of sensation; but it is impossible that it can be its mere result. Such beliefs the mind pronounces to have a universal validity. Of a similar character are the great truths which lie at the foundations of our reasonings. It is impossible to conceive of them as true in one place and not true in another. It is impossible, therefore,

to view them as the mere result of our experience of phenomena.

11. Of a similar nature must be our idea of causation. Its primary conception is unquestionably derived from our own self-consciousness. Experience may aid in its evolution; but it is impossible that it can have originated it. All that we can have experience of is, a succession of events one following the other in which we observe no variation. We advance one point beyond experience, when we arrive at the conception of an invariable succession. Yet there are innumerable successions which are in no sense causes. It may not be possible fully to develop the idea in the formal intellect. But we know it, we believe in it, we feel it; it lies at the foundation of our reason.

12. But further, it is not strictly true, that whenever there is an invariable antecedent and consequent, the one is the cause of the other: day and night stand to each other in the order of an invariable antecedent and consequent, and they must have done so from their first origin. Yet the absurdity of affirming that the one is the cause of the other is apparent. Many instances of invariable antecedents and consequents exist which it would be absurd to designate causes. It follows, therefore, that a cause must be something more than an antecedent, followed by an invariable consequent.

13. Our primary idea of causation has been unquestionably derived from our own self-consciousness, and has thence been transferred to the forces of external nature. Our conception of ourselves as voluntary originators of actions constitutes our only adequate idea of a cause. The consciousness that we are capable of originating actions forms one of the highest of our certitudes. It is one which is anterior to all reasoning, and forms the groundwork of its possibility. We know that our volition sets an entire chain of antecedents and consequents in action. We are certain that they derived their impulse from a voluntary act of our own, without which they would have had no existence.

14. Let me illustrate this by an example. Let us suppose a city to be blown to pieces by applying a match to a barrel of powder in a large magazine. It is incorrect to say that the match is the cause of the explosion. The true cause was the voluntary act of the agent who applied the match. No other of the agencies adequately satisfies the idea. But are the other unconscious forces which bear their part in the work of destruction nothing else but bare antecedents and consequents? Does it satisfy our conception of a physical force,

when it is in active energy, to describe it as such, and nothing more? I contend that it does not. What follows the ignition of the match, and its application to the barrel? The calling into activity of a number of forces, which are adequate to effect their destructive work. Are they nothing but antecedents? The mind refuses to regard a bare antecedent as fulfilling its conception of a force.

15. What is the real state of the facts? A volition determines on the action; and the understanding suggests the means adequate to accomplish it. The volition sets in action the bodily apparatus of nerves, muscles, &c. These kindle the match by friction. The match ignites the powder in the barrel, and liberates its forces; the barrel, the entire magazine. The explosion calls into activity a terrific force: this occasions a concussion of the atmosphere: the concussion effects the details of the work of destruction.

16. In a popular sense all these things are designated causes. Some of them are evidently more than bare antecedents. They are forces in energy. The conception of such a force implies the presence of a power adequate to effectuate the result. If it be urged that the force and the result are necessarily united together as antecedent and consequent, a true philosophy is bound to account for that necessity. It cannot be given by experience; and is something different from a mere phenomenon. If we affirm that the necessity is the result of a primal law, then we have arrived at the existence of a truth which must have a universal validity independently of phenomena.

17. Now, a necessary law cannot be arrived at as a bare result of experience, or have any place in a phenomenal universe. It is only conceivable as inherent in something underlying phenomena. It follows, therefore, that whenever a pantheistic or atheistic philosophy postulates the existence of necessary law, without which it cannot advance a single step in creating the universe without a God, it is compelled to admit the existence of truths valid for all space and all time; and thus to subvert the foundation on which it rests. How can we affirm that such exist in a universe in which we can know nothing but phenomena? If there be none other, philosophy must be impossible.

18. A system which refuses to take cognizance of the facts of consciousness, and to probe them to the bottom, must be necessarily one-sided. It is true that they cannot be weighed in scales, or measured by the finest instruments; which a certain class of thinkers assert to be the only criterion of truth.

Yet we can have no higher certitudes than these. If they are not certitudes, none other can be; for unless they are such, experimental knowledge is impossible.

19. But further: while this philosophy affirms that all our knowledge is the result of experience, and that we have only experience of phenomena, a modern form of it endeavours to escape from the difficulties in which it is encircled, by allowing that the experience may not be that of the individual, but the inherited experience of the race. Accordingly, it affirms that that portion of our knowledge which appears to transcend experience is really the result of a transmitted experience, derived from a long line of ancestors. How this relieves us from the difficulty it is difficult to see.

20. To deal with such a question adequately would render it necessary to discuss the relation between subject and object. This alone might well occupy an entire volume. Still, without entering into these depths, there are a few obvious facts which will be sufficient to test the truth of the position which this philosophy seeks to establish.

21. First. The assertion that all our knowledge is phenomenal, and that we are incapable of arriving at any knowledge of universal objective validity, is absolutely suicidal. The most sceptical philosophy would be still-born, unless there was some one truth which is not of this description,—viz., that which affirms the universal validity of its own assertions. Unless it was objectively valid, universal scepticism must be the result; otherwise it might be true in one part of the universe, and not true in another. So, again, the affirmation of our reason that one of two contradictory propositions must be false, must be a knowledge which transcends experience, and be universally valid. To affirm the contrary would destroy the basis on which even the most sceptical philosophy must rest. Again: it is affirmed by a popular form of philosophy, that all propositions which transcend the phenomenal are unknowable; into which region it banishes the conception of a God. If it be so, it follows that this proposition must possess a universal objective validity independent of the subject which affirms it. Some knowledge, therefore, must be attainable which transcends experience. Even Pyrrhonism is compelled to affirm that one truth exists which is universally valid,—viz., that all truth is impossible.

22. When God is banished by this philosophy into the regions of the unknowable, it confounds under a common name a number of conceptions entirely distinct; and boldly affirms that they all alike transcend the powers of rational thought.

The only ones which do so are those, the truth of which is positively unthinkable. Others vary greatly in distinctness and adequacy; but the fact that we habitually think and reason on them proves that they lie within the limits of rational inquiry.

23. Again, as far as this question is concerned, to affirm that many of our certitudes are not the result of the experience of the individual, but of his remote ancestors, is to transfer the difficulty, but not to solve it. I ask, on what did the primary experience of our remote ancestors rest? What gave it validity? However small its results, it must have possessed some principle, which rendered it possible. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that the affirmation, that things which are equal to the same thing, are equal to each other, is the result of a gradually accumulated experience, which, after repeated transmissions, now exhibits itself in our minds in the form of an intuition. Does this account of it as the result of a transmitted experience give any account of the primary conception of equality; or of the affirmation, that when two things are equal to the same thing they must be equal to one another? Does it inform us, how the power of comparison between two equal things originated? The being who could thus compare must have been separated from one who could not—not by a small interval, but by a wide and deep gulf. Will the tracing it through myriads of years help us to dispense with a commencement of the conception? The only possible account of the matter is, that there must exist some fundamental principle in the mind, which enables us to see that it must be objectively valid for all time and all space. I do not deny that experience may be the medium through which such a power may be called from a dormant into an active state. Yet this does not affect the proof that some truth must transcend experience. Were it not so, all universal affirmations would be impossible.

24. Further: some principle must exist in the mind, which is the foundation of its conviction that past events, when the conditions are the same, will repeat themselves in the future. Unless this be so, the affirmation of universal law, embracing alike the past, the present and the future, would be invalid. It is impossible that it can be given by experience alone.

25. It is evident that every affirmation respecting the future must transcend experience; for experience can be only of the present and the past. The future has not yet existed, and therefore experience of it is impossible. How, then, have we arrived at the belief that the future will be like the past? To put the question into a concrete form. How are we justified

in inferring, because the sun has risen every day of our past lives, that it will rise again to morrow? It has been urged that our experience of the past, and that of others, justifies us in inferring that the future will be like the past; that the past events of our lives were once future, and that from their having taken place, we are justified in inferring that similar ones will take place hereafter.

26. It is evident that this belief does not in any respect participate in an axiomatic character. The contrary of it is quite conceivable. Thus we are fully able to conceive the possibility that the sun may not rise to-morrow; though we feel perfectly certain that it will. So firm is our conviction that events, under precisely similar circumstances, will reproduce themselves, that it forms the foundation on which all human activity rests.

27. Is it possible, then, that our experience that past events have repeated themselves under similar conditions, can account for our belief that they will do so in the future? I ask, to what does experience extend? We have had experience of past events. As what was once future has gradually become the present, we have seen events, which once were future, repeat themselves. But how can this justify us in arriving at the conclusion that nature is uniform, and that they must continue to do so? Our belief that they will do so is an inference, and cannot therefore be founded on experience alone. Some principle, distinct from it, must exist in the mind, which justifies us in arriving at this conclusion.

28. Nor can it be arrived at by any process of deductive reasoning. No premiss can be found, resting on any self-evident principle, which can justify the conclusion that the future must, under similar conditions, resemble the past.

29. Let us recur to the example, that the sun will rise to-morrow. How do we know this? The answer which this philosophy gives, is that we believe it, because we have had experience that it has always done so; and that our experience has reached to the point that what was once future has become past. But this can say nothing as to a future which has not yet become past. Now, it is both conceivable and possible, despite of any amount of past experience, that the sun may not rise again to-morrow; or, to put the same truth in general terms, that the blind forces of nature may suddenly or gradually cease to repeat themselves.

30. If the first man who saw the sun rise had been in full possession of his reasoning powers, it is evident that from seeing it rise once, he could have drawn no inference as to what it

would do in future. All he could have done would have been to draw the conclusion that it might rise again. Nor would two or three repetitions have justified the conclusion that it would do so. But a large number of such repetitions—it is impossible to say how many—would generate the feeling of certainty. How comes this? The only possible explanation is, that there is some principle in our mental constitution which compels us to arrive at this conclusion, and that it cannot be given by experience alone. The device of referring it to a number of experiences of our remote ancestors, which may have generated an intuitive belief in us, their descendants, as an account of its origin, only removes the difficulty without attempting to solve it. The necessity of explaining what gave validity to the original experience remains in full force. Similar reasoning applies to every axiomatic principle, and to all certainties which lie at the foundation of all valid reasoning.

31. All proof must rest on something which does not require proof. Premisses cannot run up into infinity. To assert that everything must be proved is to deny the possibility of reasoning. Some premisses are acquiesced in owing to their self-evidence, or to something in our mental constitution which compels us to assent to them. They must therefore possess an universal objective validity, independent of our experience of phenomena, however closely they may be connected with it. It is unnecessary to determine whether these principles are few or many: it is sufficient that they exist. Their existence destroys the basis on which the philosophy of pantheism and atheism rests.

32. We must now consider another most important principle on which this philosophy is founded, viz., its denial that the order and adaptations of nature are a sufficient ground for inferring the existence of an intelligent and conscious mind, which the philosophy of theism designates as a Personal God. The affirmation of certain systems of current philosophy is clear, and leaves no doubtful issue, viz., that we are not justified from the presence of order in nature in inferring the existence of an arranger; or from adaptation, of an adapter, or from apparent contrivance, of a contriver; or from the suitableness of the means by which a definite result has been brought about to effectuate it, of a designer. In one word, it is affirmed, when we see in nature results which elsewhere are unquestionable evidences of the presence of intelligent mind, that all such inferences are invalid in the domains of nature; and that in making them we are only transferring the subjective impressions of our own minds into objective facts. On

the contrary, this philosophy teaches that the order and adaptations of nature are not due to the presence of conscious intelligence; but of latent unintelligent self-evolution. To put the matter broadly: it is affirmed that intelligence has not produced nature, its order and adaptations, but that nature is the storehouse from which unintelligent law and latent forces have evolved all these wonderful phenomena. Non-life has generated life; unintelligence, intelligence; unconsciousness, self-consciousness; impersonality, personality; necessary law, freedom; latent forces, moral agents. One aspect of pantheistic philosophy postulates the presence of unconscious intelligence in nature. But what is its nature, how it acts, or in what it is inherent, it leaves involved in a haziness which far exceeds that of any mystery involved in theism.

33. Let us do these theories justice. It is affirmed that our conceptions of order and adaptation are essentially human, and have no validity when they are applied to anything which is not the product of the human mind. Also it is affirmed, that all analogy fails between the works of nature and those of man; and that this renders invalid the conclusions which the theist seeks to draw from them.

34. I reply, that the objection is invalid, because, if true, it condemns us to universal ignorance. Our conceptions of law, force, and energy, are human conceptions, the creation of our own minds. If this is a reason why they must be invalid in the one case, it is no less so why our reasonings respecting them must be invalid in the other. The objection is suicidal, and one which would render all philosophy impossible.

35. But further: when we contemplate order and adaptation, we do not infer from it the presence of any particular form of intelligence, but of intelligence generally; just as when we speak of matter, time, and place, we do not confine them to the special subjects from which we have derived our conception of them; but we apply them to phenomena generally. It is perfectly true that within the range of our experience, men and animals are the only beings who are capable of producing the results of order and adaptation. We have evidence that among these, different orders of intelligence exist. We are therefore justified in concluding that different orders and degrees of intelligence may exist in regions beyond our experience; though they may differ in some respects from that of men.

36. I admit that there are a few cases in which order and adaptation have resulted from the action of that which, for want of a better term, we designate chance. Such, however, are so rare, and the instances so imperfect, that they are not worthy of consideration in the present argument. One thing

is certain. As far as our experience goes, chance is only capable of producing such results on a very diminutive scale, and after long intervals of time. Yet, the principle of chance is largely invoked in aid of the theories of this philosophy ; though all experience affirms that it is incapable of producing the results in question.

37. The all-important fact to be observed is that, as far as experience goes, lucky chances have no tendency to repeat themselves. On the contrary, the occurrence of one once is a reason why we should expect it not to occur again. Whenever such a result takes place frequently, we cannot help inferring that this must be due to the intervention of mind. Let us take an example. If we were to throw up twelve dice into the air at hap-hazard, it is possible, though in the highest degree improbable, that they might all fall with their aces uppermost. But if the operation were repeated one hundred times, and the same result followed, there is no one who is capable of understanding the operation who would not draw the conclusion that the dice were heavily loaded as the highest of certitudes. The case is precisely similar with respect to the order and adaptations of nature. They are not only numerous but innumerable. It follows, therefore, that nature in every part is loaded heavily, and that that which loads it is the Divine mind.*

* I am quite aware if twelve dice should fall with their aces uppermost, that, mathematically speaking, it is quite as probable that they would do so a second time, supposing the operation to be repeated under precisely similar conditions. Just in the same way, if a person held twenty bonds in a foreign loan, of which there were annual drawings, if one of these should be drawn, the chance that one or all of the remaining nineteen would be drawn at any subsequent year would be equally good, and would be entirely unaffected by the drawing of the twentieth. This, however, in no way affects my argument, which is founded entirely on experience and fact. There can be no doubt that if twelve dice were thrown up into the air, and they fell one hundred times in succession with their aces uppermost, every one possessed of common sense would consider it the greatest of certitudes that foul play had been had recourse to; or in other words, he would attribute the result, not to the action of blind forces or laws, but to the presence of intelligence. The same remark is true respecting the bonds. If a particular bondholder were to draw a prize at every drawing, and others never, the inference would be arrived at, that the whole matter was managed dishonestly, and had resulted, not from the action of blind forces acting according to invariable laws, but from fraudulent intelligence. In a similar manner, when order and adaptation are the result of the action of natural forces, and are brought about by these forces intersecting one another at the right time and place, the inference is no less certain, that such results cannot be due to the action of a number of blind forces, but to intelligence. Those against whom I am reasoning profess to found their philosophy on an ultimate basis of fact and experience. I reply to it by a conclusive appeal to the same principle.

38. It will be objected that this philosophy nowhere affirms that order and adaptation have been evolved by chance action, but by forces working in conformity with immutable law. I reply that chance is only another name for the blind action of unintelligent laws and forces, and that the only additional factor introduced by the term chance is, that two or more of these forces or laws happen to intersect one another at a time and place suitable for producing a particular result, and without which concurrence the result could not have existed. When these do so at such a time and place, that a particular effect is the result of their intersection, this is what we call a lucky chance. What I mean will be more easily understood by an illustration. Let us suppose a rock undergoing the process of disintegration. The action of water and of frost have opened in it several fissures. In accordance with another set of natural laws, the wind, or some other force, carries into them at this particular moment a number of seeds. These take root; fresh disintegration takes place. The operation is repeated; and thus the process is accelerated far more than it could have been by the action of a single force. This philosophy is compelled to invoke the aid of such lucky concurrences of forces in numbers numberless. Without them it would be powerless to impart to its speculations even the appearance of probability. In addition to this, it demands the right of drawing to any extent on the eternity of the past for an indefinite amount of time for the purpose of carrying on its operations. What is not possible in one hundred years may happen in one million. In this manner, with the bank of of eternity at command, all things are possible.

39. I submit that this mode of reasoning is not to solve the question, but to evade it. It gives no real account of the origin of those adaptations with which the universe abounds. On the contrary, there is something in the constitution of our minds which compels us when we contemplate an adaptation of complicated parts, exactly fitted to produce a suitable result, and observe that the result is brought about by the adaptation, to infer that it has been effected by the action of intelligence. Reason arrives at the conclusion that order and adaptation cannot have resulted from the action of unintelligent forces, but of intelligent mind. This will be the invariable inference, except where the exigencies of a particular theory compel those who hold it to renounce the convictions of common sense. Let it be observed that I am speaking, not of some imperfect condition of the human savage, but of the fully developed intellect of cultivated men.

40. The importance of this principle in reference to the philosophy of Pantheism and Atheism is strikingly brought before us in the celebrated work of Strauss, entitled *The Old Faith and the New*, in which he professes not simply to state his own opinions, but to be acting as the mouthpiece of a large number of German unbelievers. As this work has already gone through more than one edition in our language, besides the large number that it had previously gone through in Germany, it will be necessary to give it a special attention, for the purpose of exposing the unsound basis of its philosophy. The questions discussed in it are such that it is impossible to exaggerate their importance. They are as follows: In answer to the question, Are we still Christians? in the name of advanced thought in Germany, he answers in the negative. In reply to the question, Have we a religion? the answer is of a similar import. In answer to the question, What is our conception of the universe? his reply assumes the form of a material Pantheism, which differs in nothing from Atheism except in an illicit use of the language of Theism. Lastly, wonderful to say, in answer to the question, What is our rule of life? he announces himself a thorough-going German conservative, and utters a loud protest against the various forms of Communistic Atheism. It would appear that he and those in whose name he speaks are of opinion that the only effective mode to bar out the ocean is to demolish the old strongly-built sea-wall to its foundations, which has for ages past successfully repelled its billows, and in future to attempt to dam them out by substituting for it a thin layer of sand.

41. The faith into which the author's philosophy has conducted him, and those in whose name he speaks, is that of the existence of a Cosmos, the sum total of all being, material, mental, and moral, including all existence and its laws, but which is void of personality, which is deaf to the voice of prayer; in which the place of volition is supplied by necessary and unyielding laws; of an intelligent Creator, by a self-developing power utterly unconscious, which to man is incapable of being the object of either hope or trust; which in the course of its self-development has evolved both the individual and the race, and will crush them again beneath the heel of iron destiny. This power will, through the endless whirl of the eternities of time and the infinities of space, go on evolving fresh worlds out of the ashes of preceding ones, and endless successions of systems and of galaxies, in which we as individuals shall take no part, to be again absorbed into the bosom of the mighty infinite. At death our self-conscious existence shall perish, never to be renewed. The atoms which compose us, after having been absorbed into

the unconscious infinite, may be useful as materials for future life: but the hope and the destiny of the individual is eternal silence. To this, the only alleviation which this philosophy affords, is the consideration that while our conscious selves have utterly perished, the cosmos will go on evolving fresh forms of life and beauty throughout eternity, and will crush them again beneath the iron wheels of its chariot. No feeling of responsibility for the past need disturb us. Our destiny is non-entity.

42. Such is the general sum total—the net result which this philosophy propounds to us in lieu of Theism. A few quotations from it will place its principles in a striking light.

43. "The argument of the old religion was, that as the reasonable and the good in mankind proceed from consciousness and will, that, therefore, which on a large scale corresponds to this in the world must likewise proceed from an Author endowed with intelligent volition. We have given up this mode of inference. We no longer regard the Cosmos as the work of a reasonable and good Creator, but rather as the laboratory of the reasonable and good. We consider it not as planned by the highest reason, but planned for the highest reason. The Cosmos is simultaneously both cause and effect, the outward and the inward together." Again, "We stand here at the limits of our knowledge. We gaze into the abyss, we can fathom no further. But this, at least, is certain, that the personal image which meets our gaze there is but the reflection of the wondering spectator himself. If we always bear this in mind, there would be as little objection to the expression 'God' as to that of the rising and setting of the sun, when we are all the time conscious of the actual circumstances." After these and numerous similar assertions, the following utterance is remarkable: "At any rate, that in which we feel ourselves entirely dependent is by no means merely a rude power, to which we bow in mute resignation; but is at the same time both order and law, reason and goodness, to which we surrender ourselves in loving trust. More than this, as we perceive in ourselves the same disposition to the reasonable and the good, which we recognize in the Cosmos; and find ourselves to be beings by whom it is felt and recognized, in whom it is to become personified; we also feel ourselves related in our inmost nature to that on which we are dependent; we discover ourselves at the same time to be free in that dependence, and pride and humility, joy and submission intermingle in the feeling for the Cosmos."

44. Such is the substitute which this philosophy provides for

a personal God. We are to feel all this for a being (if an infinite Cosmos can be called a being) who has neither personality, intelligence, nor will, who is the prey of inexorable law, who is incapable alike of affection and of thought; who, if he has children, has not made a single provision for their wants, cares not for them, and in due time inexorably devours them. Surely the theories of Atheism are rational compared with a Pantheism, which offers such adulation to a Cosmos which can neither see, hear, feel, nor think, which is alike incapable of affections and intelligent volition. Truly, one is reminded of the mocking of Elijah, "Cry aloud, for he is a god. Surely he sleepeth, and must be awaked."

45. One of the atheistic friends of our author, whose works he advises the reader not to glance at but to study, pronounces that it would have been better if the universe had never existed; and if no life had ever arisen in the earth any more than in the moon. This assertion is certainly not invalidated by Strauss's thin logic. "If it be true," says he, "it follows that the thought that it would have been better if the universe had never existed, had better not to have existed likewise." One can hardly help thinking that the following passage must have been written in irony.

46. "Sallies of this kind, as we remarked, impress our intelligence as absurd, but our feelings as blasphemous. We consider it arrogant and profane on the part of a single individual to oppose himself with such audacious levity to the Cosmos whence he springs, from which also he derives that spark of reason which he misuses."

47. But I must now draw attention to some of the principles from which the author considers that these are natural conclusions.

48. He begins with the conception of the Cosmos, which he defines "not only as the sum total of all phenomena, but also of all forces and of all laws. The All," says he, "being the All; nothing can exist outside it; it seems even to include the void beyond." After having pointed out the various changes through which its various parts have passed, he goes on to assert that this infinite Cosmos constitutes a unity. "The Cosmos itself," says he, "the sum total of infinite worlds, in all stages of growth and decay, abides eternally unchanged in the constancy of its absolute energy amidst the everlasting revolution and mutation of its parts."

49. I have quoted these passages for the purpose of showing that the fundamental difficulties of this philosophy fully equal those of theism, against which it is in vain for it to urge that it enters into the regions of the unknowable. If the universe is

the sum total of all phenomena, forces, and laws, a few questions may be propounded for its solution. Is it nothing but these? Are phenomena and laws possessed of an objective existence, or must something else underlie them? Are laws existences, or modes of existence, or what are they? Are its forces actually existent things, or qualities inherent in them? Again, "the Cosmos is the sum total of infinite worlds." It is therefore infinite, but consists of finite parts. Can it therefore be a unity? It follows, then, that that which is infinite is not absolutely unthinkable, and that some of the conceptions which are derived from our finite modes of being may be projected into it without violating any principle of sound philosophy. But further, this infinite universe consists of parts several of which are infinite; it follows, therefore, that an infinitude which is composed of subordinate infinities, can constitute a unity. But, as a crowning mystery, we are told that it abides eternally unchanged in the constancy of its absolute energy amidst the everlasting revolution and mutation of its parts. Surely a philosophy which admits a number of such positions among its fundamental principles may be asked to show a little modesty when it assails the difficulties of theism. The one contains unfathomable mysteries equally as the other.

50. But, says our author, "the Cosmos is a phœnix, ever recovering itself from its ashes." Yes, surely, it is a consolatory truth for men who will never renew their personal existence to be assured that their remorseless parent never had a beginning to its activities, and never shall have an end, but that it shall continue throughout the infinities of time and space to cast up the bubbles of phenomena, and devour them, to reappear again in endless progression. Yet this is the god of this philosophy, who goes on endlessly reproducing himself, under the impulse of blind forces directed by equally blind laws, in endless forms of life and death, of reproduction and decay, throughout the dismal eternity of the future. Full well may Strauss's Atheist friend satirize the folly of such a god. But, no: he is alike incapable of wisdom and of folly; though he contains in himself potentiality, and evolves into actuality all wisdom and all folly, all order and disorder, all growth and decay, all good and evil, all virtue and all crime. Verily, such a god cannot be a phœnix, but a Proteus. Yet our author, and those in whose name he speaks, assert that they think it worthy of a reverend regard, and that to insult it is a blasphemy!

51. There is an obvious difficulty which confronts this philosophy, of which it does not attempt to offer a solution. If the Cosmos is thus eternally reproductive, why may it not at some

period during the infinity of future time reproduce our own personal existence, and even hold us responsible for what we have done in our previous state of being? To do so would only be to add one wonder more to the multitude of wonders which it is declared to be able to effect. Against this most serious contingency this philosophy has nothing to offer, but its dogmatic assertion that personal existence, after its fleeting phenomenal appearance, must sink into eternal silence.

52. Let us now examine some of the processes by which it attempts to account for the origin of the existing order of things. With respect to some of the processes by means of which it affirms the universe of matter to have been constructed, we need have no difficulty. They may have been the very means which the Creator has employed to effectuate His purposes; and to accept them as denoting the law according to which creation has been evolved is quite consistent with a belief in Theism. As all His manifestations with which we are acquainted are in conformity with law, and involve the use of means, so there is no difficulty in conceiving that God's creative work has been conducted in conformity with a definite law and order, and that He has made use of means in effecting it, instead of creating each separate existence immediately. On the contrary, it is highly probable that such would be the mode of His action.

53. But this is widely different from the assumption that the Cosmos can have been built up by the action of blind forces without the aid of intelligence and will. Law, however convenient as a term, denotes nothing but an invariable mode of action. In itself it embraces no conception of energy or power, although nothing is more common even in philosophic language than to confound this conception with it. But it is impossible to build the universe without the energetic action of both these. Unless forces have an action given to them, they can effect nothing,—confusion, not harmonious arrangement, will be the results of their operations. These can only be found in intelligence and will. As far as human experience extends, forces acting in conformity with blind laws, have never produced a single adaptation, order, or arrangement, but destruction only. This philosophy, for the purpose of enabling it to dispense with the directing power of intelligence and will, postulates an eternity of time, during which forces have acted, and affirms that this can produce all the results of intelligent volition.

54. Having evolved the matter of the universe into planets, suns, and systems, by means which the Theist need not dispute, as long as they have an omnipotent intelligence at their back,

energising in and through them, our author is compelled to face the question of the origin of life. He is fully aware of the difficulty of the problem, and admits that it is no solution of it to say, that its absence may be accounted for in the lower strata, by the supposition that causes may have been in existence, which have destroyed all traces of it. "There was a time," says he, "when the temperature of the earth was so high, that living organisms could not exist on it. There was once no organic life on the earth: at a later period there was: it must consequently have had a beginning, and the question is how?"

55. Yes, truly; that is the question. Kant judged that it might well be said, "Give me matter, and I will explain the origin of the world; but not, Give me matter, and I will explain the origin of a caterpillar." Let it not be forgotten also that Kant bowed in reverence before the moral nature of man, and its authoritative affirmation of the obligation of the moral law. These mighty gulfs, however, the philosophy of Atheism and Pantheism has attempted to bridge over. "Here," says Strauss, "faith intervenes with its miracle." This philosophy postulates an operation no less miraculous, viz., the action of blind forces under the direction of blind laws, continued throughout an eternity of time.

56. I need hardly say, that our author resolves all difficulties by boldly assuming the truth of the theory of spontaneous generation. Here let it be observed, that Atheism is obliged to use a word, which implies the presence of will. He admits the uncertainty of previous experiments; but nothing daunted, he affirms, "If the question of spontaneous generation could not be proved in regard to our present terrestrial period, this would establish nothing with respect to a primeval period under totally different conditions. The existence of the crudest form of life has however never been actually demonstrated. Life too, after all, is nothing but a form of motion."

57. On questions of pure physics I shall not enter. But it belongs to the present inquiry to point out the conditions of the problem which this philosophy has to solve; and not to allow it to substitute an unreal for the true issue. That issue is not the one here stated. Before it can advance one step, proof positive of the truth of the theory of spontaneous generation must be given. It is no solution of the problem, to take refuge in the assumed possibility, that it may have taken place under widely different conditions during the uncertain past. To do so is cunningly to assume the question at issue. Professor Huxley tells us that proof of the theory of spontaneous generation has yet to be given.

58. But further: supposing a living being of the lowest type could be constructed in the laboratory, does this bring us one atom nearer to the point at issue? The real question is, whence comes living matter? and what is the distinction between it and non-living matter? There our opponents, being the judges, differ *toto cœlo* from each other. Is there any evidence that matter which has never lived, can be made to pass into living forms? Till this can be shown, the mere formation of a being in the laboratory, which possesses the lowest form of life, proves nothing. The only adequate solution of this question on the Pantheistic and Atheistic side is proof positive that life is a mode of motion, and nothing else. This proof has certainly not yet been adduced, and even if it could be found, there is yet a further question which demands an answer; viz. how, whence, and where has originated this peculiar modification of motion which constitutes life; and how has it come into existence at the favourable moment for its existence? Had it not been favourable, the feeble germ would have been crushed by the mighty powers of nature in the struggle for existence. All this and much more must be answered before it can be proved, that mechanical or chemical forces can become vital ones by any powers which they possess of self-transmutation.

59. Our author endeavours to evade the question by concealing it behind a mass of scientific jargon. He says:— "Life is only a special, viz. the most complicated, form of mechanics. A part of the sum total of matter emerges from time to time out of the usual course of its motions into special thermico-organic combinations; and after having for a time continued therein, it returns again to the general modes of motion."

60. When we are famishing for scientific bread, it is cruel for philosophy to throw us a stone. As an account of the matter we are considering, part of the above sentence is unintelligible, and the remainder attempts to answer one difficulty by raising others far greater.

61. The perusal of this work affords a striking proof that the philosophers in whose names it is written were far from being satisfied with their position, even after they had obtained possession of an inorganic cell, from whence they might commence the operation of creating the various forms of organic life, of which man is the crown. They felt deeply, in the words of our author, "that no acorn ever produces a fig; that a fish always produces a fish, and never a bird or a reptile; a sheep always produces a sheep, and never a bull or a goat."

They have therefore hailed, as the rising of a new sun, the theory of natural selection as a means for constructing the worlds of life and organism, without the intervention of a Creator. For the use they make of it it is possible that its author will owe them little thanks; but they are almost ready to forgive Mr. Darwin for his postulate of the original intervention of a God to infuse into inorganic matter the principle of life, in consideration of the greatness of his discovery. He is with them, the founder of the new age, in which the belief in the being of a God is destined to become an old wife's fable.

62. Let it be observed, however, that the Darwinian theory, whatever be its merits or defects, is only a special form of a theory of creation by evolution. It assumes, in the first instance, a creative act, by which some cells had infused into them the principle of life. It then proceeds to account for the existence of every living form by the aid of two principles, designated natural and sexual selection, without any subsequent intervention of Divine power. Whatever may be thought of this particular theory, it is evident that a principle of evolution, by which I mean that all existing organisms have been gradually evolved from one another by the Creator's wisdom and power, through certain forces of which He possesses the absolute control, is as consistent with theism as any other theory of creation. The only theories which are essentially atheistic and pantheistic are those which lay down that God is not the author of the laws of nature, nor their contriver, nor the director of their operations, and that blind forces can produce the phenomena which result from the operation of intelligence, and that forces can exist independently of His constant energy. The old theory of creation was, that each species was produced by a separate creative act, the idea being that its progenitors must have started into being entire and complete. This may or may not have been the *modus operandi* employed by the Creator; but, as a theory, it leaves us in the dark how creation was effected, except that it was the result of the exertion of the divine will. A theory of development professes to give the law of progress and to account for some of the means through which creation has been accomplished. Whether it has been effected in this way, or in that, can only be determined by the facts of nature which throw light on the subject. To speak of creation out of nothing as an adequate solution of how creation has been effected is only a confession of our ignorance. The real point is, is the theory suggested an adequate account of the facts of nature? Are the means

adequate to produce the result? Or must other agencies have contributed to it, and among them the direct intervention of God?

63. There is, unquestionably, a tendency among religious men to charge every theory of creation by evolution with Pantheistic and Atheistic tendencies. This would be just, if it were a necessary part of such theories, that blind forces and laws are able to produce this result independently of the power and intelligence of a personal God. But where I ask, is the Pantheism and Atheism, if we assume that the Creator has followed a definite order and law in His creative acts, and has carried them on, as He does all the acts of His providence, by the use of means? Or if, instead of causing the first progenitors of a species to spring up from the ground, he has produced them out of beings previously in existence? Our present knowledge is very inadequate to determine how creation has been effected. This is a strong reason why we should avoid prematurely dogmatizing; but, certainly, none why we should not make it the subject of careful study.

64. There are not wanting indications that in the formation of the universe the Creator has acted through the agency of means, and not by that which we designate direct action. Of this the evidence is considerable. Whether this be an entire account of the matter is quite another question. Still more clear is it that His creative acts have followed a sequence and order, and been constituted on a general plan. This latter point must be admitted even by those who refuse to admit the theory of creation by evolution. We might have hoped that the general acquiescence in the well-known illustration of Paley's watch, would have been a sufficient safeguard against wholesale denunciations of those who hold this theory as if it were destructive of Theism. As he observes, if a watch could be so constructed as to produce another watch by its mechanism, and should thus go on producing a succession of watches, each possessed of the power of self-reparation, we should feel the most profound admiration for the skill of the artist. Nor would it be diminished, if the mechanism could construct a first-rate chronometer; and this a succession of still more perfect instruments. The only point in which such a theory can be either Pantheistic or Atheistic is when it is assumed that such harmonies can have resulted from the action of blind forces, without the intervention of intelligence.

65. Still more remarkable is it that such a theory should be suspected of Pantheistic or Atheistic tendencies, when we reflect that the mode in which God has created every individual

is by a process of evolution. Yet, surely, it will not be pretended that He has not made each one of us, and every individual of every species. Yet He has unquestionably effected this by a process of evolution. The media through which He works may be very obscure; but this does not affect the fact itself. History also teaches that in man the evolution of more perfect from less perfect states, is the order of God's providential government of the world. The New Testament declares that revelation has been communicated in a similar manner. Why, then, may not the Creator have created different species by producing one out of another by a process unknown to us. It is absurd to attempt to shut up all inquiries on this subject, by asserting that all such theories are either Pantheistic or Atheistic.

66. Still, it is undeniable that the Darwinian form of this theory has been widely embraced by the philosophic schools in question, as affording an apparent solution of some of their difficulties. The joy with which they have hailed its advent is very remarkable. It becomes, therefore, a duty thoroughly to examine into its ability to produce the results in question, and to estimate the difficulties with which it is attended. Yet, it must not be forgotten that its author distinctly assumes the necessity of a Creator to infuse into matter the first forms of life, and to impress on it its laws. This difficulty can only be got over by Pantheists and Atheists by the exercise of a hearty faith in some unknown powers of the past or discoveries of the future. It follows, therefore, that the faith which they deride in connection with religion and Christianity is essential to this philosophy. It demands the exercise of faith in the unseen, viz., the discoveries of the future or the unknown possibilities of the past, for without it it is destitute of even the semblance of proof. It would seem as if faith in the unseen is only objectionable when it is demanded in connection with religion.

67. It follows, therefore, that it is impossible for these systems to bridge over the interval which separates life from not life. There is also another interval which can be spanned by no arch, viz., the production of the power of sensation. According to these theories, there must have been a time when there was no sensation in that part of the universe to which we belong. There, therefore, must have been a time when the first being which was capable of sensation sprang into existence. Pantheism will, perhaps, affirm that the infinite Cosmos has ever possessed within itself sensation and intelligence. If so, particles capable of sensation must have existed in that fire mist out of which the present order of things has been evolved,

the heat of which was sufficient to have sustained all existing matter in the form of gas. If so, their existence must have been very uncomfortable during the countless ages the matter of the solar and sidereal systems has taken in cooling. The alternative will doubtless be preferred, that a time once was, when the first being capable of sensation began to be. But a vast interval separates the sentient from the non-sentient, not a succession of trifling variations. The philosophy which attempts to construct a universe without the intervention of a God is bound to give us an account of how the first sentient being began to be.

68. But there are several other states of being which are separated from each other, not by short steps but by vast intervals. Among these self-consciousness occupies a conspicuous place. It is obvious that it exists. It is as certain as any fact of time or space. We can all and each of us utter the mysterious word "I," and attach a distinct meaning to it. It is the most mysterious of words. Who shall fathom its profound depths? It is that which separates between self and not-self, person and thing. It is that which constitutes us a unity in the midst of plurality and change. As beings capable of self-consciousness, we feel that we have existed through long intervals of time, surrounded by and deeply interested in multitudes of things which are not ourselves. Not one particle of matter constitutes our present bodies which composed them twenty years since, yet we are the same. There must have been a time when self-conscious beings existed not. There must, therefore, have been one when a self-conscious being first began to be. Here then is an interval the depth of which the imagination can but imperfectly fathom. It is not too much to say, that no theory of evolution can bridge this over without the intervention of a self-conscious Creator.

69. There is yet another interval. A being may be a person, and yet have no conception of right or duty. I select this conception as representative of the whole moral nature of man, of which it forms the most remarkable characteristic. It is immaterial to my argument whether the utilitarian philosophy is correct in its analysis of the origin of the idea. I firmly believe that it is not. But the fact cannot be gainsaid, that vast numbers of minds, of the highest order, have a clear conception of duty quite distinct from any reference to utilitarianism. On the contrary, they feel the strongest obligation to sacrifice themselves to it in contradiction to the strongest dictates of expediency. There is something within us which says, let right prevail, even if the heavens fall. There must, therefore, have

been a time when the first being, who was capable of feeling a sense of duty, who could bow before a moral law, and say, "I ought," began to be. The interval is one which separates the conception of duty from non-duty; of conscience from non-conscience; of a moral nature from the want of it. The difference is not one of degree but of kind. Between laws of motion and their modifications, and conceptions of duty, there is no one thing in common. When the idea of duty first originated a new order of being entered the universe.

70. Even if the principle of the utilitarian philosophy is correct, that duty is the obligation to seek the greatest happiness of the greatest number, the argument is unaffected by it. The question still imperatively demands solution, how came it ever to be felt to be a duty, to seek the greatest happiness of the greatest number? When and how has this sentiment arisen? Of what form of motion is it the modification?

71. Such are some of the gaps which must be bridged over by means of clear and indisputable facts, before a philosophy which has no other forces at its command but blind, unintelligent ones, can account for the origin of things. But supposing for argument's sake that these have been surmounted, the question at once arises, whether the pantheistic and atheistic theory of evolution is adequate to account for the existence of the various orders of beings which lie within these bounds. I will now examine some of the special agencies by which it has been attempted to be shown that the various forms of organized life have been developed without the agency of a being possessed of personal intelligence and power. The only principles which this philosophy presses into its service for that purpose are Darwin's two principles of natural and sexual selection.

72. I by no means wish to affirm that these may not have been potent instruments in the hands of Omnipotence by which God has carried on His creative work. That they act within certain limits is an obvious fact. The question is, what are those limits? Are they the only agencies? Are they alone adequate to the work? Must not other principles, known and unknown, have contributed to it? Is their distinct and separate agency conceivable without Omnipotence at their back?

73. We must begin by assuming that life has somehow originated in the earth. The problem before us is as follows: given matter and force acting in conformity with invariable laws, both alike destitute of intelligence, to evolve everything in the sentient universe, which bears the indications of the action of intelligence. Let us even suppose that one or more cells have been evolved from which our course of evolution is to com-

mence which is ultimately to culminate in the production of man.

74. There is one resource to which this philosophy flies in every difficulty, and which it uses with unbounded freedom,—an infinite storehouse of past time. If a thing cannot be effected in one thousand years, it can in a million; if not in a million, it can in one hundred million. If the last period is inadequate, boldly multiply, for it is impossible to break the bank of the eternity of the past. With this agency at its command, all things are possible. Let us hear Strauss:—"Short steps and longest intervals of time are the magic formula by which actual science at present solves the mystery of the universe: they are the talismans by whose aid she quite naturally unlocks the portals, formerly reputed to fly asunder at the sole bidding of miracle."

75. Yes, truly: there is more truth in this passage than its author probably intended to convey. The action of this principle is truly magical and talismanic; it is worthy of the deep consideration of those who invoke it, whether it can effect any results more real than the magical formularies and talismans of the *Arabian Nights*. Little jumps, and infinite time to jump in, is all that is required to evolve all the order and adaptations of the universe, which exist in numbers passing all comprehension. The proposition that, if we have time enough to walk to a galaxy, compared with which the distance of Sirius is a speck, by taking steps of an inch long, we shall get there in the course of infinite time, may be incapable of being disproved; but it is absurd. I submit that this continual invocation of infinite time is not a rational solution of a difficulty, but an evasion of it.

76. The truth is that physical science breaks this magic wand in the hands of the operator. While it tells us that the universe has existed a vast interval of time in its present form, it affirms that it cannot have existed for an indefinite one. The laws of its physical forces assign to it clear and definite limits, which it cannot have exceeded. It follows, therefore, that indefinite demands on a past eternity cannot be tolerated by a sound philosophy.

77. Not only is this philosophy compelled to assume that a number of small variations must have taken place, which for any practical purpose it is impossible to distinguish from infinite; but it is compelled to take for granted that all those have been on the side of progressive improvement. Yet the history of man testifies that nature has made many failures and retrogressions. Human progress has been, unhappily,

full of them. But these are easily got rid of by the theory of the destruction of the weakest and the survival of the strongest in the struggle for existence. Yet history informs us that some of the weak races of mankind have a remarkable tenacity of life.

78. But if such a tendency exists in nature, this philosophy is bound to give us some account of its origin. Tendencies in nature on the side of progress are very useful ones. It is, therefore, a serious question, How got they there? For ought that appears, blind matter, force, and law might have produced tendencies suited to shiver systems to pieces, and not to construct them. Does not the existence of such tendencies imply the presence of superintending mind?

79. But, says this philosophy, all that is necessary is to continue advancing by slow and gradual variations; and this glorious universe, with all its complicated adaptations, crowned by man, will appear at last! We need not care for the shortness nor the variety of the steps, nor for occasional movements in a backward direction; for have we not infinite time at our command? The cell, with its lowest forms of life, or the intellectual or moral atoms diffused in yonder fire-mist, will in due time produce all the complicated organisms of living beings, with their wondrous adaptations, and at length a Newton, a Shakespeare, and a self-denying Howard.

80. But, I ask emphatically, are such short steps all that is required? Shall we not be brought to a standstill by the absence of necessary conditions? Blind forces cannot effect their work except by the aid of things which, for want of a better name, we must call favourable chances, by which I mean forces intersecting one another at the right time and place. What myriads of forces must have worked in vain for the want of this condition of successful operation? Let me illustrate this by the example which Strauss has chosen as an illustration of the manner in which we may readily account for the production of the various organisms of nature. "Let us suppose," says he, "a herd of cattle in primitive times to be still destitute of horns, only possessed of powerful necks and projecting foreheads. The herd is attacked by beasts of prey: it defends itself by running against them and butting with the head. The butting will be the more vigorous, the bulls the fitter to resist the beasts of prey, the harder the forehead with which he butts. Should this butting in an individual have developed into an incipient horny accretion, then such an individual would have the best chance of preserving his existence. If the less equipped bulls of such a herd were torn to pieces, then the

individual thus equipped would propagate the species. Unquestionably there would be some at least among its descendants in whose case the paternal equipment would be repeated; and if on renewed attacks these very ones again survived, and, moreover, principally those whose horns were most developed, then little by little, by transmission of this weapon to the other sex, a completely horned species would be formed, especially if the other sex would of its accord give the preference to the males thus ornamented; and here Darwin's theory of natural selection is supplemented by the so-called sexual selection, to which he has recently devoted a special work."

81. Few of the operations of nature would seem to be more simple than the manufacture of a horn; let us, therefore, carefully examine the amount of time and lucky chance which this theory finds it necessary to postulate as necessary for its formation. This will give us a clear idea of the difficulties which must have been surmounted in the course of the evolution of man from an inorganic cell, if there was nothing but unintelligent forces to operate with.

I. The theory before us presupposes a very favourable concurrence of circumstances with which to commence our operations. Nature has already kindly furnished us with a herd of cattle, with powerful necks and protruding foreheads. How long it must have taken to form these latter appendages this philosophy does not tell us. Having eternity at its command, it simply brandishes its magic wand and says, as indefinite a number of eons of past time as you require.

II. Another favourable condition is provided all ready for our use. It seems that a horn cannot be grown on a hornless animal without the exercise of butting; accordingly, a number of beasts of prey are at hand at the proper time and place to offer battle to our unhorned herd—these, be it observed, are supposed to be fully equipped with all their weapons of offence. But suppose that these latter had come into existence at a different time and place, or that instead of our oxen being surrounded by beasts of prey, they had come into existence among a number of peaceful creatures, the whole operation of horn-growing must have come to a standstill. The concurrence of such favourable contingencies could only have occurred after the lapse of indefinite eons.

III. The herd, when attacked, defend themselves by butting. It was fortunate that nature should have furnished them with this impulse. This looks like the presence of intelligence, for unintelligent nature might quite as well have provided them with a disposition to run away when attacked, as she has the

hare, and there would have been no tendency to generate a horn. Such a disposition must have required the concurrence of multitudes of favourable circumstances for its formation, as well as that of indefinite eons of time.

IV. The act of butting has a tendency to harden the skull; this we know to be a fact. Still, a philosophy whose object is not theory, but truth, cannot help inquiring, Whence came this tendency? It might have been one in an opposite direction.

V. We are next invited to assume that repeated acts of butting have not only hardened the skull, but developed a horny accretion. The remarks of our author might lead the reader to believe that all this could have been effected in a single generation of bull life. But it is quite evident that it could only have been the result of the struggles of protracted generations, who succeeded in transmitting to their descendants a gradually increasing horny appendage. If it were not so, bull life in those primeval ages must have been protracted to a period compared with which the age of Methuselah must have been as nothing. Let it be observed also, that the concurrence of every one of these favourable conditions must have been continually repeating themselves.

VI. The bulls, says our author, who have succeeded in developing these horny appendages will have the best chance of preserving their existence. Still this is a chance only, but not a certainty, for many other contingencies might have destroyed them. Deaths from disease were probably not unknown in primeval times, and against this the possession of an incipient horn would have been no prevention.

VII. We are next asked to assume that these bulls go on continually fighting until all the less-equipped ones are torn in pieces, in order that an individual with incipient horns may become the progenitor of a race. This philosophy, however, is utterly silent as to the number of years and of favourable contingencies it would have taken to bring about this result. It simply brandishes its magic wand, and the unhorned oxen disappear.

VIII. It is necessary that the bull with incipient horns should procreate descendants similarly equipped. It is undoubtedly in accordance with natural facts that he should do so. Still this philosophy is bound to tell us how came this law into existence, for it has the appearance of being a result of that intelligence, the existence of which it denies.

IX. Our incipient horn has yet to grow into a longer one, and then into a longer one, until it attains its full length. For this purpose, these processes of fightings and buttings, and

throwing out of small variations and survivals of the strongest, besides ever-recurring favourable contingencies, have to be repeated times without number. To evade these difficulties, our only resource is again and again to brandish our magic talisman of infinite time.

X. As yet this long and painful process has only led to the evolution of horned individuals, and not a horned race. We must therefore invoke the theory of sexual selection, and suppose that the horned females fall in love with the horned appendage of their male companions. It is not easy for us to say what are the precise ideas which cows entertain of beauty. We know, however, that it is far from an invariable fact that the most handsome men and women unite in matrimony. Still, however, the assumption must be made, that the horned bull is irresistibly attractive to the horned cow before a horned species can be finally established by the forces at the service of this philosophy.

82. It is hardly possible to go through these successions of indefinite eons of time, and of concurrences of lucky chances with gravity, and suppose that they constitute a true account of the past history of the race of long-horned oxen. But the consequence which I deduce from it is a perfectly grave one. Few operations of nature can have been more simple than the evolution of a horn. But if by the aid of these forces alone the operation must have been so complicated, involving indefinite eons of time, and the casual concurrence of multitudes of happy chances, for its accomplishment, what must we say of the period requisite for the production of the other peculiarities of the race of oxen? What must we say of the infinitude of them, which must have been necessary for the production of all the complicated organisms and adaptations of animal life? This philosophy affirms that the bodily, intellectual, and moral nature of the most highly gifted man has been slowly evolved by a few unintelligent forces in a long line of ancestry from a simple cell. Will it endeavour to compute the number of distinct species which must have been evolved in this long succession; the number of eons which must have elapsed before each stage could have been accomplished? or the number of happy chances which must have concurred before each step could have become a possibility? When it has done this, let it multiply these arrays of figures, which it is scarcely possible to embody in any finite conception, and present us with the result? Surely this philosophy has stumbled on the regions of miracle without observing it. Far more miraculous is this mode of evolving the universe than the intervention of an intelligent Creator.

83. The number of intersections of independent forces, directed by nothing but blind laws, which this system is compelled to postulate, is alone sufficient to destroy its claim to be received as a philosophy. We know, as a matter of fact, that the occurrence of one lucky chance is a reason for expecting that it will not occur again; but this system is compelled to postulate them in endless succession. What right has it to make unlimited drafts on the infinite past, or the infinite future? What can positive science have to say to either of them? To affirm that blind forces can effect all things, if they have only sufficient time in which to operate, is not to propound a philosophy, but its negation. Our author, however, is not insensible to the difficulties with which he has to struggle. "It was doubtless," he says, "no small achievement, when, in yon ape-like horde, which we must consider as the cradle of the human race, the thoroughly erect posture became the fashion, instead of the waddle or partially developed gait of the higher apes; but step by step it went on improving, and time at least was no consideration. . . . . More astonishing still does this progress appear, from the harsh scream of the ape to articulate human speech."

84. Yes, doubtless, vast is the gulf which separates the two, for it involves the entire interval which separates the rational from the irrational, the self-conscious from the non-self-conscious, the capacity of moral obligation from the absence of it. Strauss is well aware that without language as an instrument, all real thought is impossible. He therefore summons to his aid a race or races of intermediate beings, of whose existence the evidence is *nil*, and supposes that they have existed. He also observes that monkeys have a kind of language, although he candidly admits that, whatever else they are capable of being taught (and they can be taught many things), they have never learned to speak, even when they have been brought into the closest contact with man. Nor has our constant companion, the dog, with his half-rationality and his apparent desire to give utterance to his feelings, made the smallest approach to the use of articulate speech, although he has been the friend of man for thousands of years. If a pantheistic or an atheistic philosopher could educate either the dog or monkey to use rationally even the lowest elements of human language, he would do more to prove his theory than by millions of conjectures.

85. But, adds our author, "Ere that prehuman branch little by little elaborated something of a language, periods of immeasurable duration may have elapsed; but after he had once hit upon speech, in however imperfect a condition, the speed of his progress was vastly accelerated," &c.

86. I ask emphatically, is it reasoning, to have recourse to the magic talisman of infinite time, as the solution of every difficulty? Is it not more rational to invoke the aid of an intelligent Creator? If it be replied that an intelligent Creator belongs to the regions of the unknowable, does not an inexhaustible past eternity equally belong to them? Does it not leave the origin of intelligence utterly unsolved?

87. Our author justly remarks, that if the power of thought fills us with astonishment, that of feeling is no less marvellous. "A divine force," says he, "reveals itself in the sensations of the lowest animal as much as in the brain of a Newton." After giving utterance to this great truth, a number of reasonings follow, for the purpose of proving that neither the one nor the other is divine. "If," says he, "under certain conditions, motion can be transformed into heat, why may it not, under other conditions, be transformed into thought, into sensation, or even into self-conscious reason and will?" Why, indeed? Because the one class of phenomena are entirely different from the other. Any philosophy worthy of the name ought to give proof of its assumed facts, instead of taking them for granted, by asking others to prove their impossibility.

88. This school of philosophy is forced to admit that there are certain organisms which are formidable obstacles in the way of elaborating the universe without the aid of an intelligent Creator. Of these, the eye may be taken as a crucial instance. "It is formed," says Strauss, "not in the light, but in the darkness of the womb, yet it is admirably adapted to light which has had no concern in its formation." A similar difficulty is well put by another writer, quoted by our author, respecting the instincts of animals. "These latter enable them to perform from their birth, with hereditary finished art, to which the highest reason might have prompted them for their well-being, without any thought, experience, or practice on their part, or any instruction, example, or pattern." Pantheism endeavours to account for this by assuming the presence of unconscious intellect in the universe.

89. Let it be observed that our sole experience of intellect is as an attribute of conscious beings. If philosophy is to rest on a basis of fact, the existence of unconscious intellect diffused in the universe is a gratuitous assumption. No doubt many intellectual processes take place in our minds without leaving any trace on the memory; perhaps without emerging into direct consciousness. This is especially the case with such actions as have become habitual. But this affords no proof of the presence of intellect in a wholly different class of beings. If unconscious

intellect can exist independently of any thinking subject, and aid in the construction of organisms, it follows that it must be inherent in every particle of matter of which they are composed. Also, that these unconscious intellectual atoms must have the faculty of acting in unison for the production of a common end; and from the various means by which it may be accomplished, of selecting the most suitable. The bare statement of such a proposition is its most effectual refutation.

90. Next, our author invokes a theory of an unconscious absolute, which, "acting in all atoms, and organisms, as a universal soul, determines the contents of creation, and the evolution of the universe, by a 'Clairvoyant Wisdom,' superior to all consciousness." Such a theory may safely be consigned to the regions of dreary mysticism, though it is one which was hardly to be expected from one who imagines that he has escaped from the regions of the miraculous, by eliminating the conception of God from his philosophy.

91. But to enable him to account for the production of beings endowed with these faculties our author supplements these two principles by a theory of inherited habits, transmitted through a long line of ancestors, which have been gradually accumulated through indefinite successions of eons. "It is not," says he, "the seeing individual which forms its own, or its offspring's, eyes by acting in concert with light . . . . . the individual finds itself put into possession of an instrument which its predecessors, during immemorial time, have gradually brought to an ever higher grade of perfection." Again, "It is not our present bee which plans its skilful constructions, neither is it instructed in them by a Deity; but in the lapse of thousands of years, since the lowest instincts were gradually developed into the various forms of Hymenoptera, the increasing needs produced by the struggle for existence have gradually fashioned these acts, which are now transmitted without effort as heirlooms to the present generation."

92. In the case of the eye there are two problems which require a definite solution, and we must not have our mental vision distracted from the point at issue by any phantasmagoria of words. First, the admirable adjustments and adaptations of the instrument itself—How come they? Secondly, How has this instrument, formed in total darkness, become perfectly correlated to the properties of light? There is one solution of these problems quite simple, and fully adequate to account for the facts—the existence of a God of boundless power and matchless skill, and fully acquainted with all resources and the end to be attained, who has framed the mechanism and adjusted it to external nature.

93. But there is also the solution of Pantheism and Atheism. Some of the simplest forms of life in the shape of cells burst into existence we know not how. These in the course of indefinite eons developed themselves into organisms of the simplest character, and these into others of endless variety impelled by blind forces alone; these grew into more perfect forms in the struggle for existence. Though why, until life had become abundant, there should have been any struggle at all it is hard to conceive. A power of sensation originated somehow, but how or whence we have no means of telling. These beings gradually differentiated themselves;—but how, whence, or where this power originated, or how each became possessed of another power, that of propagating its like—this philosophy is silent. After long courses of indefinite eons, a general power of sensation, diffused throughout the entire animal, concentrated itself in special senses, and produced the lowest form of eyes. Eon after eon rolled on its relentless course; variation arose after variation. Struggles for existence were ever ready to destroy imperfect specimens; at length one of the most perfect forms of eyes emerges. But all this leaves the problems with which we started utterly unaccounted for, viz., whence has originated the adaptations of the instrument itself; and how, being formed in darkness, has it become perfectly adapted to external light.

94. With respect to the origin of instincts, our philosophers take refuge in a theory of transmitted habits during something like an eternity of time. Step by step they have grown from the smallest origin, and by gradual accretions have been handed down from remote ancestors until they have assumed their present form. But if this were conceivable, the question arises, How came habits to be thus transmissible? Is it the result of the action of blind forces or of intelligence? Again, why is it that the inherited habits of instinctive intelligence, which must have been possessed by multitudes of ancestors in the long line of man's pedigree, have not been transmitted to him; but in this respect he is utterly distanced by the inferior animals? Let it be observed, that it is not a single instinct which has to be accounted for, but numbers numberless, spread over the wide regions of animated nature, and each adapted to the external circumstances of the animal.

95. The philosophy which we are considering is never wearied with urging the objection that our conception of a personal God is nothing more nor less than a magnified man. A very popular writer has recently had the bad taste to assert that the belief in a personal God differs little from a magnified Lord Shaftesbury. Such a question is one far too grave to be settled by ridicule.

96. It is perfectly true, that as long as man is man he can only represent truth in human conceptions. No less so is it that multitudes of his conceptions are inadequate representations of the realities beyond. If our reasonings were to be confined to conceptions which are adequate representations of things, they would be few indeed. The truth is, there is a law of our intellectual being which compels us to transcend the limits of the finite, and to assert that there must exist something beyond our highest conceptions of it. It is the very condition of thought.

97. But this philosophy affirms that the conception of a being who is at the same time personal and infinite involves a direct contradiction, and that a philosophy which asserts the existence of a personal God must be rotten at its foundations.

98. It is perfectly true that we have no experience of personality except as an attribute of finite beings. Let us inquire what we mean when we affirm that we are persons. A being who is a person is one who can predicate "I" of himself, who is conscious that he is distinct from all other persons, and non-persons, whose identity is preserved throughout all changes, and through protracted intervals of time, who feels himself to be a free agent, and is the subject of moral affections. There is no reason why an infinite being should not be capable of all these. The objection would be equally valid against introducing infinite quantities into calculations, because all our conceptions are finite. These, however, exist for the practical operations of mathematicians.

99. There is no doubt that the habit of theologians of reasoning about the infinite in the abstract, and not in the concrete, has involved the whole controversy in serious difficulties. What do we really mean when we assert that God is infinite? I answer that He is a being who transcends our highest thoughts, and that He is something beyond which we cannot fathom; that there is no point of space where His energy is not present; that there is nothing which is possible, which He cannot effect; nor any knowledge which He does not possess. His moral attributes ought to be designated perfect rather than infinite. The conception of infinite is quantitive, a moral one has nothing to do with quantity. Perfection, not infinitude, is properly applied to our ideas of justice, holiness, truthfulness, benevolence. The conception of a personal being, who in this sense is both infinite and perfect, plainly involves no contradiction; and is evidently not unthinkable, though our conception of Him may be inadequate.

100. Now, while it is a law of our nature that all our ideas must be human ones, there is no possible reason why they may

not represent attributes of other beings as well as of ourselves. If I see an animal perform actions of a certain character, I am justified in drawing the conclusion that they are the results of intelligence, although I am only acquainted by actual experience with human intelligence. I infer justly that the animal mind possesses in these respects an intelligence similar to my own. If, then, I can conceive of an imperfect form of intelligence, and reason on the fact, why may I not attribute our highest powers, freed from the imperfections with which they exist in man, to God? To assert that such an act is merely to manufacture a gigantic Lord Shaftesbury is not to appeal to reason, but to the worst feelings of our nature.

101. Nothing more clearly shows the impotency of this philosophy to grapple with the difficulties in which it is involved than the necessity it is under to use language which contradicts the truth of its own assumptions. Our author endeavours to apologise for the practice: "In so far as we speak," says he, "of a purpose in the universe, we are clearly conscious that we are expressing ourselves subjectively, and that we only express by it what we seem to recognize as the general result of the co-operation of the entire powers of the world."

102. In one word, all such expressions are blinds to enable us to impose on ourselves. A purpose in the universe is no purpose. It exists only in a delusive fancy of our subjective selves. Numbers of similar conceptions made use of by this philosophy can only exist as attributes of personality, and are utterly inapplicable to an impersonal something, whether we designate it Universe or God.

103. Yet our author writes as follows:—"The general deduction from the existence of the universe appears to be, as a whole, the most varied motion or the greatest abundance of life; this motion or life specialized as one developing itself morally as well as physically, struggling outwards and upwards, and even in the decline of the individual only preparing a new uprising."

104. Such language is a plain stultification of the principles on which this philosophy is based. Still more remarkable is the following passage:—"From our standpoint the object of the terrene development seems much nearer its attainment now, when the earth is filled by men and their works . . . . than many thousands of years ago, and when she was still exclusively occupied by mollusca and cretacea, to which fish were added later, then the mighty saurians with their allied species, and, finally, the primeval mammals, yet without man."

105. What object? I ask; for an impersonal Cosmos can have none. Is man, then, the end of creation, its complement and crown? Is the purpose of an impersonal Cosmos getting near its realization? Unless this philosophy utters absolute nonsense, it has arrived at the same conclusion as Theism, that a purpose exists somewhere in the universe. Common sense must draw the conclusion that a purpose can exist only in a personal intelligence, *i.e.* in God.

106. But there is a future which this philosophy must face, and which the mind of man, despite of all philosophy, will inquire into with the profoundest interest. What, then, are the destinies of the Cosmos? What are the future prospects of man as an individual and a race? Let us hear the answer which it returns. "Nevertheless a time must come when the earth will be no longer inhabited; nay, when we shall have ceased to exist as a planet. Then all which in the course of her development was produced, and in a manner accomplished by her—all living and rational beings and all their productions, all political organizations, all works of art and science—will not only necessarily have vanished from existence without a trace, but even the memory of them will survive in no mind, as the history of the earth must necessarily perish with her."

107. Surely this is a dark prospect which this philosophy unfolds. Man, as an individual, and as a race, shall pass into eternal silence; and no trace of him or his works shall remain in any mind. Still, if this is the inevitable destiny of the future, let us face it boldly and honestly; and not imitate the ancient philosopher, who wished, if the doctrine of man's immortality were not true, that no one should undeceive him while he lived. No; if this philosophy is true, the most cultivated intellects, the greatest moral elevation, and the lowest baseness of wickedness, shall alike rest in peaceful, but eternal silence.

108. Again, "Either the earth," says the author, "has missed her aim here—no result has been produced by her protracted existence—or this aim did not consist in something which was intended to endure, but has been attained at every moment of her development." Let us take courage then, for the gospel of despair can only express itself in the terms of the gospel of hope. Nature, then, has an aim and a purpose! Aims and purposes are not attributes of an impersonal infinity, but of intelligence, personality, and will. It also announces that the infinite All perishes not, nor ceases from its perfection. "The All in no succeeding moment is more perfect than in the preceding one, nor *vice versâ*. There exists in it, in fact, no

such distinction as sooner or later, because all gradations and successions, stages of contraction and expansion, ascent and decline, becoming and perishing, exist side by side, mutually supplementing one another to infinity." This, then, is our consolation. Though we perish, the mighty All remains unchanged in its perfection. The elements of which we are composed may, during the evolutions of eternity, help to build up glorious galaxies, though of ourselves, as conscious individuals, there shall be no resurrection.

109. There is something in human nature too strong for the reasonings of pantheistic and atheistic philosophy to crush. Danton, when questioned at his last trial as to his abode, replied, "My abode shall soon be annihilation; but I shall live in the pantheon of history." This philosophy teaches that even this hope is only a fond delusion. What are the substitutes it furnishes to satisfy the eager cravings of the human heart? Ah! a reverent regard for a Cosmos for which it is impossible to feel either reverence or regard. The memory of a departed wife, to be to us in place of a religion; the worship of humanity, typified in a female form, the destruction of which humanity is certain. This is its substitute for a personal God, the moral governor of the universe, which He has created; whose attributes are justice, mercy, and truth; whose providence embraces all His works; who shall continue reigning for ever and ever. Religion teaches an hereafter, which shall give a scope for the exercise of man's mighty powers, which is denied him here. But this philosophy affirms that one destiny awaits the holiest and the most abandoned, the man of the most disinterested benevolence and the most refined cruelty, a Nero and a St. Paul—a silence from which there shall be no awakening—the conscious being of both alike shall be swallowed up in the infinite Cosmos. The only conclusion of such a philosophy must be, let each man enjoy life as he best can, for we shall die to-morrow, and sleep for ever the sleep of unconsciousness. The best safeguard against such a philosophy is, that human nature will refuse to accept it as a true account of its aims, its aspirations, and its destinies.

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Members and Associates—1st January, 1871, 203. Joined since.—In 1871, 91; in 1872, 109; in 1873, 110.

PUBLICATIONS.

Since the Inauguration of the Society, on the 24th of May, 1866, the following Papers have been read:—The Quarterly Parts are indicated by the numbers.

In 1866-7.

1. A Sketch of the Existing Relations between Scripture and Science. By the late GEORGE WARINGTON, Esq., F.C.S.
2. On the Difference in Scope between Scripture and Science. By the late C. MOUNTFORD BURNETT, Esq., M.D., Vice-President V.I.
   On Comparative Philology. By the Rev. ROBINSON THORNTON, D.D., Vice-President V.I.
   On the Various Theories of Man's Past and Present Condition. By the late JAMES REDDIE, Esq., Hon. Sec. V.I.
3. On the Language of Gesticulation and Origin of Speech. By Professor J. R. YOUNG.
   On Miracles: their Compatibility with Philosophical Principles. By the Rev. W. W. ENGLISH, M.A.
   Thoughts on Miracles. By the late E. B. PENNY, Esq.
   On the General Character of Geological Formations. By the late E. HOPKINS, Esq., C.E.
4. On the Past and Present Relations of Geological Science to the Sacred Scriptures. By the Rev. Professor JOHN KIRK.
   On the Lessons taught us by Geology in relation to God. By the Rev. J. BRODIE, M.A.
   On the Mutual Helpfulness of Theology and Natural Science. By Dr. GLADSTONE, F.R.S.
   On Falling Stars and Meteorites. By the Rev. W. MITCHELL, M.A., Vice-President V.I.

(The above Papers, with the Discussions thereon, and with "Scientia Scientiarum; being some Account of the Origin and Objects of the Victoria Institute," with the Reports of the Provisional Proceedings, and the Inaugural Address by the Rev. Walter Mitchell, M.A., Vice-President, form Volume I. of the "Journal of Transactions," price One Guinea.)

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5. On the Terrestrial Changes and Probable Ages of the Continents, founded upon Astronom Data and Geological Facts. By the late EVAN HOPKINS, Esq., C.E., F.G.S.
   On the Credibility of Darwinism. By the late GEORGE WARINGTON, Esq., F.C.S.
   On the Credibility of Darwinism. By the late JAMES REDDIE, Esq., Hon. Sec. V.I.
6. On Utilitarianism. By the late JAMES REDDIE, Esq., Hon. Sec. V.I.
   On the Logic of Scepticism By the Rev. ROBINSON THORNTON, D.D., V.P.
7. On the Relations of Metaphysical and Physical Science to the Christian Doctrine of Prayer. By the Rev. Professor JOHN KIRK.
   On Geological Chronology, and the Cogency of the Arguments by which some Scientific Doctrines are supported. (In reply to Professor Huxley's Address delivered at Sion College on 21st Nov., 1867.) By the late J. REDDIE, Esq., Hon. Sec. V.I. (1867-68).
8. On the Geometrical Isomorphism of Crystals, and the Derivation of all other Forms from those of the Cubical System. (*6 large Plates*). By the Rev. W. MITCHELL, M.A., V.P.

(Forming Volume II., price One Guinea.)

In 1867-8.

9. On the Antiquity of Civilization. By the Rev. J. H. TITCOMB, M.A.
   On Life, with some Observations on its Origin. By J. H. WHEATLEY, Esq., Ph.D.
   On the Unphilosophical Character of some Objections to the Divine Inspiration of Scripture. By the Rev. WALTER MITCHELL, M.A., Vice-President V.I.
   On Comparative Psychology. By E. J. MORSHEAD, Esq., Hon. For. Sec. V.I.
10. On Theology as a Science. By the Rev. A. DE LA MARE, M.A.
    On the Immediate Derivation of Science from the Great First Cause. By R. LAMING, Esq.
    On some of the Philosophical Principles contained in Mr. Buckle's "History of Civilization," in reference to the Laws of the Moral and Religious Developments of Man. By the Rev. Prebendary C. A. ROW, M.A.
    On the Nature of Human Language, the Necessities of Scientific Phraseology, and the Application of the Principles of both to the Interpretation of Holy Scripture. By the Rev. J. BAYLEE, D.D.
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    On the Simplification of First Principles in Physical Science. By C. BROOKE, Esq., F.R.S., &c.
    On the Biblical Cosmogony scientifically considered. By the late G. WARINGTON, Esq., F.C.S.

In 1868-69.

On Ethical Philosophy. By the Rev. W. W. ENGLISH, M.A.

12. On some Uses of Sacred Primeval History. By D. MCCAUSLAND, Esq., Q.C., LL.D.
    On the Relation of Reason to Philosophy, Theology, and Revelation. By the Rev. Prebendary C. A. ROW, M.A.

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13 Analysis of Human Responsibility. By the Rev. Prebendary IRONS, D.D. (And part 16.)
On the Doctrine of Creation according to Darwin, Agassiz, and Moses. By the Rev. Professor KIRK.
14. On the Noachian Deluge. By the Rev. M. DAVISON.
On Life—Its Origin. By J. H. WHEATLEY, Esq., Ph.D.
On Man's Place in Creation. By Professor MACDONALD, M.D.
15. On More than One Universal Deluge recorded in Scripture. By Rev. H. MOULE, M.A.
On Certain Analogies between the Methods of Deity in Nature and Revelation. By the Rev. G. HENSLOW, M.A., F.L.S.
On the Respective Provinces of the Observer and the Reasoner in Scientific Investigation. By the Rev. EDWARD GARBETT, M.A.
On the Credulity of Scepticism. By the Rev. R. THORNTON, D.D., V.P.
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18. On Spontaneous Generation; or, the Problem of Life. By the Rev. Professor KIRK.
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In 1870-71.

20. On the High Numbers in the Pentateuch. By P. H. GOSSE, Esq., F.R.S., V.P.
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In 187

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[*Date*] _____ 187 .

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See page 42.

A NEW EPISTLE,

BY

THE APOSTLE PAUL,

ADDRESSED TO

THE LORD BISHOPS

OF

ENGLAND AND IRELAND,

AND

RECENTLY DISCOVERED AMONG SOME OTHER MANUSCRIPTS OF REMOTE ANTIQUITY, AND VERY EXACTLY AND DILIGENTLY

Translated out of the original Greek.

London:
Imprinted for Effingham Wilson, Bibliopolist.

MDCCCXXXIX.

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND

The Lord Bishops

OF

ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

Right Reverend Fathers in God,

(As I believe it is your will to be designated,) in presenting to the world this Translation of an Epistle newly discovered of the Apostle Paul's, I judge that your patronage is the most congruous under which to usher it into notice. For, my Lords, my heart has often been sore pained within me, at the hard thrusts to which ye have been exposed by rude men, who have, as it seemeth to me, unduly exalted the authority of ancient Scripture, stupidly preferring truth to cour-

tesy. These men have, in their coarseness, alleged that Holy Scripture does contradict and gainsay your Lordships; and indeed I must confess that, if taken absolutely, it does condemn many things which obtain in that pure and Apostolic Church, whose mitres your Lordships wear. And often have I wished from my inmost soul, in common with many sincere Christians, that Holy Scripture did less plainly and harshly reprove your Lordships: and it has been the fondest wish of my heart, to do somewhat that may assist, be it ever so little, in removing all cause for this reproach, and to find a high warrant for you. To me, pondering these matters, there did appear only two ways in which a thing so devoutly to be wished could come to pass: Either, (I thought,) your Lordships would do well to comform somewhat to ancient Scripture (which indeed is scarcely to be expected of men in your Lordships' station); or else, and perhaps this is the better plan, Scripture should be made to conform to your Lordships. And long has the idea possessed me, that, of

necessity, there must exist somewhere, other Apostolic writings than those generally admitted, and widely different therefrom; and to discover such precious documents has been my most diligent study. And lo! to me, as an humble son of the one true Church, as I believe, has this honour been vouchsafed, to discover and bring to light—from the long concealment of ages—an Epistle most indubitably Pauline, and one which, I think, will set ye right with the foolish people who have been wont, in their unmannerly devotedness to truth, to contrast your Lordships with your predecessors, the Apostles, and to say, from Scripture, things unseemly to be said of our spiritual pastors and *Masters*, and of our ghostly fathers. Great, therefore, is my joy to find, at length, that all things for which idle men do clamour against ye, are indeed authorized by your predecessor Paul (—though perhaps it is irreverent in me, unhappy man that I am! to name him thus: will your Lordships kindly instruct me on this point? Should I have said *His Grace, Paul?* For

since it is absurd to suppose that your Lordships, as successors to the Apostles, would assume titles unknown to those whom you as manifestly succeed as you imitate, I am ready to conclude that the Apostle now named, was designated *The Most Reverend Father in God, Paul, Primate of*—alas! my Lords, I am unlearned in Ecclesiastical History,—yea, I am but a babe, and my memory is treacherous,—I have forgotten the name of his diocese,—if I should say Primate of all the world, they of Rome will rebuke me, saying, that to The Most Reverend Father in God, Peter, was assigned the universal primacy.—)

And I humbly beg of your Lordships, that, for any inaccuracy in this translation now set forth, your Lordships will grant me absolution: errors arising from my limited scholarship there may be, but it rejoiceth my heart that there is nothing herein contained contrary to your Lordships, or to the Church of England. This epistle bears internal evidence of truth, because it is a

kind of fac-simile of the Church: complete, perfect truth, is when the thing said, and the action done, do agree; otherwise truth is maimed. Now, my Lords, this Epistle sets forth and exhibits in *words*, what the Church of England sets forth and exhibits in *deed;* therefore is it authentic, and, for its genuineness, your Lordships may take my word. And it is my earnest prayer, that your Lordships will cause this Epistle, as manifestly apostolic as the Church itself is apostolic, (and by the same token,) to be read in Churches, like the other Epistles; first causing it to be added to the canon of Scripture. Great will be the advantages thereof; for as it repeals or amends the former writings, and is in itself just what positively ought to be, and what is indispensable, to vindicate your Lordships and your Lordships' Church, your Lordships may henceforth have somewhat to appeal to in defence; and may no longer be dismayed and put to silence, as always hitherto, when the foolish cry is raised, To the law and to the

testimony. Here is law, here is testimony, now.

But, indeed, my own private opinion is, that your Lordships and your predecessors have always known of the secret existence of this Epistle, and have made it the very ground of your and their proceedings, arranging all the framework of the constitution of the English Church in strict accordance therewith: and the common reader, even, will perceive the agreement, the most wonderful, and exact, and delectable agreement, between this Epistle and the Church of England. Why then did not your Lordships bring forth this warrant for your high bearing? it was, doubtless, that modesty, that patience under calumny, that magnanimity for which ye are so exemplary, that did restrain. But now shall your meekness be known; now shall a crown of glory surmount the mitre; for, if ye have known of its existence, as indeed ye have acted as if ye did know, your patience in enduring the

contradiction of sinners is the more memorable, and shall be appreciated by a discerning public, who will now, in admiring gratitude, bow themselves down at the soles of your feet, and lick the dust thereof, as heretofore, none but the clergy only have done; whose subjection, indeed, like that of the admired Spaniel, has corresponded with your Lordships' bearing towards them; for, also, how otherwise could things have continued as at present? As reasonable would it be to expect tyrants, where there are none to be tyrannized over; or to find slave-owners, where there are none that will be slaves.

My Lords, that your Lordships may continue to act, as ye always have done, (and which is just what this Epistle enforces,) so that the time may the sooner come, when the true Church shall be emancipated from every yoke, is the earnest desire of

My Lords,

Your Lordships' grateful Servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

TO THE PUBLIC.

NOTE.—The Translator deems it right to state, that, so soon as some learned men of both universities have satisfied their scholarly curiosity as to the valuable MS., a translation of which is here offered to the devout regard of the public; and so soon as an artist, already engaged thereon, has finished the needful preparations for presenting to the world an engraving of the roll and of the singular characters in which it is written, the MS., with its remarkable envelopes, shall be deposited in the British Museum. In the meantime, a general idea of the appearance of the roll and of the characters employed, may be formed from Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study, &c.

From some memoranda on one of the envelopes, the Translator is inclined to think, and in this many eminent divines concur, that this was one of the parchments left with Carpus, at Troas; vide II Timothy iv.—13. There is also a sentence with the figures 1771 on the inner covering or case of the roll, which is not so distinct as to warrant anything like confidence at present, but it appears probable that the meaning of the sentence is this,—that the Epistle was not to be made fully public till 1771 days after the decease of the writer. Now, taking each day for a year, and adding thereto 68, which was the year of our Lord when the Apostle was beheaded, it makes 1839, the very date of this present year! If this conjecture be correct, it will serve as an additional evidence in favour of the unsuspecting reception of this precious relic.

It is proposed, that in process of time this Epistle shall appear in another form, viz. with notes, philological, critical, explanatory, and doctrinal, accompanied by a paraphrase and commentary. In the meantime this is commended to the candid consideration of every lover of truth, and of every one who desires the Church to be characterized by conformity with the requirement of Scripture.

THE TRANSLATOR.

A NEW EPISTLE,

By the Apostle Paul.

CHAPTER I.

1. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, to his holy successors, scattered throughout the regions of England and Ireland: Beloved Brethren,

2. As it is meet that I should have upon me the care of all the churches, not only of those already planted, but also of those that shall be formed, I think it fit, while I am in this tabernacle, to write unto you also;

3. That when the times and seasons shall be changed, ye may know how ye ought to behave yourselves as the successors of us the Apostles of the Lord.

4. And first I say I joy and rejoice with you all, beholding as in a glass before-hand your stedfastness, and that above all things ye hold fast the one thing needful as ye have been taught:

5. Wherefore persevere even unto the end.

6. And for rejoicing once again is there occasion, seeing that ye are delivered from those toils, and sufferings, and persecutions which befel me in every place, as also the other Apostles as ye know.

7. Furthermore, this forewarneth me that as there will be a change of times and seasons, so reason is that there be also a change of those precepts delivered of old to holy men in sundry places and in divers manners.

8. Be it therefore known unto you, men and brethren, that certain commandments, contained in the writings of the Evangelists and the Apostles, were not intended for all ages but only for a season to be regarded.

9. For ye know how that in the days of old we were commanded not to receive honour one of another; nor to strive who should be the greatest; nor yet to receive titles from men, as Rabbi, as it is written, Be not ye called Rabbi, and again, Call no man Father upon earth, for one is your Father and Master:

10. And moreover it was enjoined not to be high minded, but to be clothed with humility, and to condescend to men of low estate:

11. Also ye have heard that it was said, Love not the world, and If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

12. Furthermore it was said to them of old time

who did desire the office of a bishop, that a bishop must be blameless,—apt to teach,—not greedy of filthy lucre,—not covetous,—having a good report of them that are without.

13. And besides all this, they were to feed the flock of Christ with knowledge and with understanding, not for filthy lucre's sake, neither as lords over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock: not self-willed, not soon angry, sober, just, holy, temperate.

14. But now brethren, beloved for your work sake, I have it in charge to communicate sundry things even unto you descended in a long line from us:

15. And first know ye that although the Apostles were to be men who had seen Christ Jesus in the flesh, and though of necessity our office did cease for ever when we were taken up into glory, yet is there no reason why ye should not be styled, as ye are wont, The Successors of the Apostles.

16. Yet some will say, They were twelve in number, ordained to one particular work, which being ended there is of necessity an end of the office.

17. Such are unruly and vain talkers whose mouths must be stopped. But let no reasonings of carnal men prevent ye from taking to yourselves this title, as in claiming authority in matters of doctrine and of tithe, ye will find it a thing not to be despised.

18. Moreover this will clothe ye with importance in the eyes of the undiscerning; and all men have not wisdom.

19. Furthermore, to make ye greater in the sight of men, (a thing for the teachers of Christian humility to seek after,) it is needful that ye do not renounce titles which Christ indeed did once forbid.

20. Be ye now therefore called Right Reverend, and Most Reverend Fathers in God, and let men style you, Your Grace.

21. ¶ And notwithstanding Christ did once say that his kingdom was not of this world, yet now is there an annulling of this which went before,

22. And ye may therefore knit together in bonds not to be severed, his church and the world whensoever opportunity serveth. Suffer therefore kings, and all that are in authority, to lord it over God's heritage, even as indeed ye also do.

23. Let kings henceforth be styled The Head of the Church, albeit it is said of Christ, He is head over all things to the church: call ye them also, whatsoever they believe or do, Defenders of the Faith.

24. And whereas I did once write to the saints which were at Corinth, that I would not suffer a woman to usurp authority in the church over the men, yet is there now a new commandment;

25. And this is the new commandment, that ye

allow women also to have even the chief authority in the church: for the days will come, when a virgin shall sit upon the throne.

26. Therefore let her be your chief; and albeit she is of tender years, yet must she appoint the bishops, when, by reason of death, their habitation is desolate, and their bishoprick another has to take.

27. But, and if wicked men do gainsay this, saying, that, if a woman may fill the highest station in the church, being the head thereof and appointing to office therein; other women may occupy the lower stations thereof, and sit on benches in the Lords' house, and in stalls, and in pulpits of wood, take no heed of the word that is spoken.

28. And without respect to truth, for the fashion of the church passeth away, let all princes, even though they do evil in the sight of the Lord, be solemnly pronounced Most religious and gracious persons.

29. ¶ I will also that ye never speak of us as Labourers in God's vineyard, nor yet as Fishermen of Galilee, but that such things straightway be forgotten, and that we be denominated The College of the Apostles;

30. And that no man among you do think himself bound to walk even as we walked, seeing that former things have passed away and all things are become new: nor yet would it be seemly for Bishops to labour as did we and the other Apostles: neither yet is it fitting that they should teach the

ways of God to man, nor feed the flock of Christ, as the elders heretofore.

31. I will therefore that your horn be exalted: that ye sit in the chief seats of the synagogues: that ye aim to become not only priests, but even as princes (as it is written He hath made us kings),

32. Looking, not at the things which are unseen and eternal, but at those things which are seen, thrones, and dominions, and principalities.

33. Moreover seeing fine gold is to be desired, I charge you to provide bags that wax not old, and be diligent in laying up in store for yourselves and for them whom God has given you. For if any man provide not for his own house he is worse than an infidel.

34. Wherefore see that ye be diligent in putting your sons into the priest's office, that they may have the morsel of meat spoken of by the prophet, and may follow Christ for the loaves and fishes.

35. Also let your conversation be, not in heaven, but on earth. Plot without ceasing. Unite with men of high estate. Sit in the council among the highest.

36. Be learned in the law, not indeed of Christ, but of the land. Give your voice for war, as ye indeed do of old. Suffer not slaves to leave the yoke, but order that they be obedient to their own masters, and give thanks.

CHAPTER II.

1. I Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, beseech you, in order that the days may come when the church and the world shall be one, so blended as not to be separately discerned;

2. That ye baptize all infants, and by that act regenerate them, making them members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

3. And need is that I write thus unto you, because neither did Christ enjoin this, nor did any of the other Apostles so write heretofore: but I would not have ye be ignorant, brethren, how that ye need not in these days say any more, What saith the Lord?

4. Consider what I say, and give good heed that ye depart not from my Gospel, how that for every male child to be baptized there must of necessity be two godfathers and one godmother; and for every female, one godfather and two godmothers. This do, and ye shall do well.

5. ¶ And seeing the days draw nigh when men will feed the church who know not how to pray, let there be written in order sundry prayers that may in all places be read on the first day of the week, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

6. Also ye have heard that it was said, Preach the Gospel; and If any man preach any other Gospel than that I have preached, let him be accursed.

7. But seeing how many thousands there are who profess themselves moved by the Holy Ghost to take on them the oversight of souls, who neither love nor know the Gospel once delivered unto the Saints, I Paul do repeal that sentence, which truly is a hard saying;

8. And I will that men be allowed to be put in trust with the Gospel whatsoever they believe, or even if they believe nothing at all, seeing this is good and profitable unto them for the life that now is; and without doubt such men will both save themselves and them that hear them: And charity thinketh no evil.

9. Besides all which, lawful ordination doth cover a multitude of sins.

10. ¶ Furthermore I command that all men be constrained to give abundantly of their carnal things to those who have dominion over their faith. Yea, take ye, as an earnest, the tenth of all things.

11. Make all men Hear the church. Let the church, that is the clergy, live upon other men's labours, themselves working not at all;

12. If any man obey not this word, note that man and bring him before magistrates, and if he take not joyfully the spoiling of his goods, shut him

up in prison that he may not come out thence till he have paid the uttermost farthing: Judge ye, is not this well pleasing unto God.

13. But take good heed to yourselves, brethren, that the weapons of this warfare be not carnal, that is to say, Jewish;

14. For yourselves know that in the days of old, while as yet the tabernacle, and after that the temple, was standing, and while the people paid tithes to the sons of Levi, this was by the command of God, and not as an ordinance of man.

15. And if any man did withhold, it was not an arm of flesh that did constrain or punish; this thing pertained unto God alone. For, truly, the kings of Israel did not in their own name command aught relating to the worship of the Most High, for themselves also were subject unto him who is King in Zion, not daring to add unto the things written, nor to take away from the words of the book of the law.

16. But, in all these things, ye, in your days, shall have the pre-eminence over us the chosen of God.

17. For I foresee that princes, both temporal and spiritual, will have a right to ordain whatever seemeth to them good:

18. And this is well, only, as I wrote afore, the wise among ye, who are as master builders, will

give heed not to build on the foundation of Moses and David, or the customs of the Jews,

19. Seeing that they had a pattern given them in all things, and were under authority even in things minute; God himself ordaining, and he alone, for it is written, the Lord is our king, the Lord is our lawgiver.

20. ¶ Exhort priests and deacons to persecute heretics. Let no man think for himself: if any man presume to think for himself call him an infidel, a blasphemer: shew them that he who separateth himself is worse than a drunkard.

21. Towards such an one have no charity. Render unto him evil: heap coals of fire on his head, if so be that ye have power. If he be sick and in misery, suffering cold and hunger, have no compassion on him even though, as touching faith, hope, and charity, he himself is blameless. Let him be accursed.

22. These things charge ye and exhort, although the clergy will not need to have their pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, for I foresee their forwardness in this same matter.

23. Furthermore exhort them to keep good company; to christen, marry, and bury, in season and out of season, for this will minister fees.

24. ¶ Let no one in any wise read the absolution till he be in priest's orders, (for how can such an

one forgive iniquity?) then let him pardon and absolve men's sins, even as it shall be written in the ordination service, Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained.

25. Moreover, let Curates learn to be in subjection to the higher powers: let them still be clothed with humility. And to this end see that they have not much of this world's Mammon committed to their care; because the Scripture speaketh expressly of the little that a good man hath; and they should know how to suffer need.

26. It being only ye, the Lords over God's heritage, that must be clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, and be found in Kings' houses, setting not your feet on the ground for very delicateness.

CHAPTER III.

1. And as touching the ministry of the word, I will that the priest (know ye not how in former epistles all saints are called priests, but that now ye are to limit the name, as the manner is at Rome also, unto those who have been consecrated to the priestly office by the bishop,) be clothed in a white robe;

2. Which robe let the wardens of the church wash duly, that it may be without spot, at the general cost.

3. And let the priest no more pray, but read sundry prayers made by other people, and authorized by the civil powers, so that there may be no variety to fix the attention; which prayers also are well pleasing unto those who know not how to pray, having only a form of godliness.

4. See to it also that they read publicly, as if they were true, the blessed books of the Apochrypha, thereby giving all possible sanction thereto, albeit ye know that they are the words of men and not the words of God, and exalting the same to equal rank with those books which were written by holy men of old who were moved by the Holy Ghost. Thus doing, the trumpet will give an uncertain sound.

5. At every mention of the name of Jesus, let all the congregation bow down; and when, with an audible voice, the priest shall repeat, and the people after him, The Belief, let no man in any wise forget, that he is, above all things, to turn to the East, which also the heathen were wont to do of old time.

6. Furthermore in every place let one be appointed and paid to cry with a loud voice, A-men.

7. And when there is made an end of reading all the words of morning and evening prayer, let the priest be sure, yea, brethren, let him be very sure, to put off from him his white robe, and be clothed in a black one, and so preach;

8. For judge ye of your own selves, whether it be seemly that a man should both pray and preach in the same robe. Did I Paul act thus?

9. And let not the preached word be too long. In many cases a few minutes, if due haste be made, may suffice, for the flesh is weak. And let the clergy buy sermons ready made.

10. ¶ And when ye come together to eat the Lord's supper, let the priest see that he stand on the north side of the table; and after sundry prayers, let him lay his hand on all the bread, and lay his hand upon every vessel, be it chalice or flagon, in which there is any wine to be consecrated.

11. And if the consecrated bread and wine be all spent before all have communicated, the priest is to consecrate more.

12. When all have communicated, the minister shall reverently place upon the Lord's table what remaineth of the consecrated elements;

13. And when the service is ended, if any of the bread and wine remain unconsecrated the curate shall have it to his own use: But, if any remain of that which was consecrated (understandest thou what thou readest?) it shall not be carried out of the church, but the priest, and such other of the communicants as he shall call unto him, shall reverently eat and drink the same.

14. ¶ And concerning baptism, I have written afore in few words that ye must baptize all infants, although Christ did not so enjoin, which, indeed, matters nothing, for, consider how dreadful would it be for a child to die unbaptized:

15. Wherefore, if an infant be not likely to live, let the people fetch, with all haste, a priest, even if it be at dead of night: for, better is it that the child be only half-baptized, than pass out of the world without being regenerated by baptism.

16. And, in baptizing children, let the priest be sure to make on the forehead the sign of the cross.

17. And let him certify the people, that, by baptism, the child is renewed of the Holy Ghost; and let him, therefore, thank God for the same

18. But some will say, how can a babe, unconscious, be thus born again? or what efficacy is there in four, or it may be five, drops of water from the font, or in the sign of the cross?

19. Thou fool; did not Christ say, suffer little children to come unto me, and how can they come, except by baptism?

20. ¶ And if any die, though he have been a liar, an adulterer, a thief, a swearer, and to every good work reprobate, let him be buried in consecrated ground, provided he was duly baptized in infancy, and thereby made a child of God.

21. And when they come to the grave, and some cast earth upon the body, let the priest say, without faltering of voice, or scruple of conscience, these words:—namely,

22. Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great mercy, to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

23. Now I would not have ye unmindful, brethren, of these words, how that every man, whether he were a drunkard or unclean, is to be solemnly denominated a brother.

24. And ye are to count his death a mercy to him, and are to believe he is happy with the Lord; provided always he was properly baptized in his infancy.

25. And ye must, therefore, seriously, say to God in prayer, whom ye were once told to worship in spirit and in truth, We give thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world.

26. But take heed, brethren, for this is not to be said over any that die unbaptized; ye may not bury them at all; let them be cast out anywhere and anyhow,

27. That it may be fulfilled which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah! my brother: they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah, Lord! or, Ah, his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

28. ¶ And as concerning marriage, which is honourable in all, let the priest teach very distinctly and solemnly, that marriage is ordained for the procreation of children.

CHAPTER IV.

1. Bear with me yet a little, beloved, while I speak further of things which it is meet I should declare unto you.

2. Ye know how the Lord Jesus Christ did say, that, wherever two or three were gathered together in his name, he would be present to honour their assembly:

3. And ye have heard, how, in old time, the disciples of Christ did meet for the worship of God, in private dwellings, and in caves and dens of the earth, and by the river side; and that Christ, himself, the teacher sent from God, did preach to many thousands in desert places, and on mountain tops, and by the sea side.

4. But now it is unlawful for a congregation to worship God after this fashion. Ye must build churches, and when built, must they not be used until a bishop do consecrate the same: the ground thereof, and the walls thereof, must be made holy.

5. And if any say, What mean ye by this service? answer the fool according to his folly. And if any priest do minister unto the Lord in places unconsecrated, let him be put out of the ministry.

6. And in like manner let there be graveyards solemnly consecrated, (let him that readeth under-

stand,) that therein the bodies of the saints may rest in peace: and to this end, let the bishop with his clergy, in regular procession, march round the utmost boundaries thereof, and in so marching, let them mutter certain prayers and certain portions of holy writ.

7. And so the ground whereon they march is holy ground; and great is the blessedness of that man whose bones are laid therein; for, as I wrote afore, he is in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection; and meanwhile God hath taken his soul to be with him.

8. And wot ye not, that this is the cause wherefore men unbaptized are not to be laid in holy ground; for if this were not a privilege, how could the refusal thereof be for punishment to evil-doers?

9. ¶ Furthermore, ye know how that in all the churches of Jesus Christ, which were planted by us, the apostles of the Lord, in Judea, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, and in all other places, there were only two kinds of officers, namely, bishops, or overseers, who also are called elders, and deacons.

10. For this appeared good unto us, and unto the Holy Ghost, and to be becoming the simplicity that is in Christ: also we received this of the Lord.

11. But, as the church will become more and more conformed unto this world, and will desire

that which may minister to the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, Know ye that ye need not walk according to our rule.

12. There may be archbishops, who shall take the oversight of the bishops, having the largest share of the one thing needful; for money answereth all things.

13. And, specially, will these be serviceable at the coronation of kings, whom let them anoint with holy oil; and let them crown, as the less is blessed of the greater.

14. And let there be archdeacons, who may be profitable unto you the bishops, performing your duties at certain seasons, and while ye are in the council of the nation, contending earnestly, as it is written, and fighting the good fight for principality, and power, and high places.

15. For no longer need bishops watch for souls as those who must give account; this let those do who sit not in the chief places of the synagogues, and who are not called of men Rabbi, which being interpreted is, My Lord.

16. And beside this, giving all diligence, add unto these, deans, rural deans, prebendaries, canons, minor canons, chancellors, vicars general, commissaries, officials, surrogates, proctors, and others, which the time would fail me to mention.

17. And when ye ordain a priest, say, Receive the

Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a priest in the church of God, now communicated to thee by the imposition of our hands.

18. And add thereto yet this, Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained.

19. Thus, too, shalt it be asserted, that such priests are the only ones who may be certain that they have the body and blood of Christ to give unto the people.

20. ¶ And now, brethren, farewell. Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you. Let no man convert a sinner from the error of his way except he follow with you.

21. Yea, let not any minister under your authority, give the hand of fellowship to those who follow not with you: no, not so much as to pray with such that the kingdom of God may come;

22. For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans; and God hath shewed you how ye should call such men common and unclean; therefore beware of dogs.

23. For better is it that souls should perish from the way, and should be cast into hell fire, than that ye should countenance such men, even though they do hold the head, Christ Jesus.

24. Finally, beloved, I will that thus doing ye say to such, Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou; and, We are the men.

25. Behave ye, therefore, as did the Pharisee, of whom even our Lord spake, and who stood afar off from the Publican, and thanked God.

26. ¶ The church at Rome greeteth you, whom ye ought so to love as your own selves, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but loveth it and cherisheth it.

27. Wherefore, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably therewith, for she is the mother of you all, and it is written—Honour thy father *and thy Mother*.

28. They of Babylon (which also is called Rome, but this is a great mystery) salute you, specially the man of whom it was said, He shall be revealed in his time, and who, as God, sitteth in the temple of God.

29. Also all they that be of his household salute you, expecting shortly to see you.

30. May wealth, and dignity, and honour, and splendour, and pomp, and power, be with you all evermore. Amen and Amen.

FINIS.

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John J. Williams, Colenso

On the Efforts of Missionaries among Savages. By the Right Rev. J. W. Colenso, D.D., Lord Bishop of Natal.

On a former occasion, at the invitation of your secretary, I attended a meeting of this society, of which I have not the honour to be myself a member, for the purpose of hearing Mr. Reade's paper upon *The Efforts of Missionaries among Savages.* I need hardly say, that having had some personal connection myself with such "efforts," having laboured for some years in the endeavour to improve a heathen race, rude and savage as any of those to whom the paper in question was likely to refer, I felt a peculiar interest in the subject, and listened to the lecture with close attention. There were some statements in it from which I dissented, and some which I much regretted; yet I felt that it was good to have had the question raised—to have had the work of missions among savages inspected and discussed from a layman's point of view; and I was too well aware, from my own observation and experience, that some of Mr. Reade's strictures were far from being undeserved. Upon the whole, however, I thought it would be best, rather than express myself in a few hasty words, which would but imperfectly convey my views, and would be very liable to be misunderstood, to request permission to lay before you more deliberately my thoughts upon the subject, as I propose to do on the present occasion.

Mr. Reade's account of the corrupt habits of native converts—that "every Christian negress whom he met with was a prostitute, and every Christian negro a thief,—"to whatever extent it may have been justified by the facts which fell under his observation, must be supposed, of course, to apply especially to that part of Western Africa in which he has spent five months of his life. But, in so short a time, as your President observed, it would seem to be impossible for any one to form a fair and true estimate of the entire results of missionary labours among the natives of any district. And that missionary, I imagine, spoke only the simple and obvious truth who said to Mr. Reade, "You cannot measure the amount of moral influence which our teachings exercise." It would have been impossible to do so without more intimate knowledge of the native language, and closer acquaintance with the ways and doings of the people, than such a hasty visit could have permitted. I presume, however, that there were *some* outward signs on which Mr. Reade must have based his judgment, and that in certain cases which came more immediately under his eye there was great dishonesty among the men, and great immodesty among the women. But admitting this, it would be only fair to suppose that this state of things may possibly be exceptional upon a coast where the slave-trade, with all its abominations, has so long prevailed, and is still, notoriously, more or less extensively practised; where, consequently, whatever good instructions may be given by the missionaries, or whatever good exam-

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ples may be set by the better class of white residents, laymen as well as missionaries, must have been to a great extent neutralised by the vicious conduct of others. I conceive, therefore, that Mr. Reade may have been, perhaps, unfortunate in having had the immediate neighbourhood of the Slave Coast as the only locality in which he has had an opportunity of examining into the "Efforts of Missionaries among Savages." Having no personal acquaintance, however, with that coast, I shall confine my remarks chiefly to the savage tribes of South-Eastern Africa, among whom my own lot has been cast, and to the mission-work which is carried on among them.

Before I proceed, however, let me say that, of course, I shall not think it necessary to discuss any of Mr. Reade's expressions of religious opinion. It was distinctly stated on the former occasion that those present were in no respect committed to the approval of the views expressed in any paper, because they accorded their thanks to the lecturer for the pains he had taken in laying those views before them. In a body of scientific inquirers like this it is obvious that the expression of religious opinion must be free, provided only that it is kept within the bounds, which the charities of social life require each right-minded person to keep, when enunciating propositions which he is aware may be unacceptable, may be even offensive and painful, to some of those present. It must be left, I presume, to the chair to decide, if necessary, in any case where those limits have been transgressed.

I have no intention, therefore, to make any comments on the religious views of Mr. Reade, for the expression of which he alone must be responsible. And, in like manner, I claim to be held singly responsible for any which I myself may express on this occasion. As much as possible I wish to avoid treading on debateable religious ground. But it is not possible wholly to do so when treating of a subject like the present. And, indeed, as was well observed at the former meeting, while this is no place for discussing difficult points of dogmatic theology, yet man, being a "religious being," and religious questions having very much to do with his physical, moral, and mental development, they cannot be ignored in the proceedings of a society which professes to deal with all that concerns the nature of man.

You are aware that the district of Natal—*terra Natalis*, as it was called by the old Portuguese navigators, because discovered by them on Christmas Day,—is situated on the south-east coast of Africa, between the degrees of south latitude 29-30, and therefore almost within the tropics. In extent it may be reckoned as about one-third of England and Wales; and the population at this time may probably be fairly stated as consisting of about 15,000 Europeans, of whom two-thirds are English and the others chiefly Dutch and German, and 150,000 natives, who, though of many different tribes, are called by the common name of Zulus, from having been once collected under the rule of the late Zulu despot Chaka. The name *Kafir* is an Arabic word, meaning "unbeliever." As such, I believe, it is even now applied by the Mohammedans of India to the English

and other Europeans. And as such also it was probably applied by the Mohammedan Arabs, who have settled on the eastern coast of Africa, to the heathen savages with whom they came in contact on that continent. All the tribes of south-central, as well as south-eastern, Africa, may be reckoned collectively as Kafirs, since they speak only different dialects of the same common tongue. For though the languages spoken by different tribes are sometimes so different that even natives living within the small district of Natal can hardly understand each other, yet philologists have shown conclusively that these languages are all fundamentally the same,—nay, that there are strong affinities between those spoken by the tribes on the *eastern* and those on the *western* coast of Africa. The subject has not, indeed, been thoroughly worked out as yet. But I believe that the tendency of modern inquiries is towards the conclusion that the whole central part of Africa, from the north-west to the south-east, is inhabited by kindred tribes, speaking only different varieties of the same common tongue, though often, as I have said, so different that only scientific skill can trace the connection. Thus Mr. Reade's negroes of the Gaboon may be after all only distant connections of the Zulus or Zulu-Kafirs of Natal. The word "Zulu" means "heaven." But the people have been so called from a former chief of that name, and not with any notion that this particular tribe had any claim to be regarded as the "Celestials" of south-east Africa.

It appears to me that Mr. Reade's paper expresses, perhaps in rather strong and even exaggerated language, thoughts which, however, are present more or less distinctly in the minds of many laymen in connection with the subject of missions, as, for instance, that missionaries are really doing little or nothing for the improvement of savage races,—that their reports are either dishonest and "cooked," as the phrase is, to meet the eyes of their paymasters in England, or else are tame chronicles of trivial circumstances, which are not worth communicating,—and that, in fact, large sums of money are thus wasted, which might be more profitably used, if spent upon works of charity nearer home. Now, I am one who do entirely believe, nay, I know, that in spite of many serious drawbacks, some inevitable, some capable of being remedied, the "Efforts of Missionaries among Savages" have been a great blessing to them. And because I believe and know this, I am not afraid or unwilling to look the truth in the face,—to have our work scrutinised and our defects pointed out, as I have said, from a layman's point of view,—where necessary, to confess our faults and shortcomings, and to consider how those faults may best be amended, that so the blessing may be greater, and the work be done yet more effectually.

I will begin with saying that I am not careful to make much defence for the expenditure of considerable sums of money upon missions. On the one hand I cannot indeed sympathise with those who argue that to save one human soul is a sufficient return for spending any amount of money, and sacrificing any number of lives. I say I cannot sympathise with this argument, because it assumes that the soul in question is in danger of being *lost*,—that is, as such persons

mean, eternally lost,—that the Father of spirits has left it to be decided by the caprice, or zeal, or the greater or less measure of selfishness of one or more of us poor mortals, whether our brother's soul shall be eternally saved or eternally lost. Now this I, for one, do not believe; nor indeed can those who use the argument really and truly believe this. If they did, would they ever spend a penny on themselves which they could possibly avoid spending? Would they ever buy a newspaper, eat butter with their bread, drink sugar with their tea, or sit down to enjoy one of the commonest daily blessings which their money has purchased, instead of hurrying to give all their gains and savings, and scrapings to swell the amount of the mission fund? No! whatever men may say, they practically show that they do not in their heart of hearts believe this; they do not believe that the heathen will pass away into the pit of endless woe, because no friendly hand has ever been held out to them,—because no messenger of God's Love has ever reached them,—because the Great Being who made them has left them unvisited, uncared for,—and their fellow-creatures have been too busy, too self-indulgent, or it may be too poor in means, however rich in love, to remedy this neglect of their Creator!!

Yet such a horrible doctrine as this has certainly been taught, and laid down as the very basis of Christian missions. Let me quote a few words from a prayer which has been printed within the last ten years for the use of a missionary institution (I am ashamed to say) of the Church of England. "O Eternal God, Creator of all things, *mercifully remember* that the souls of unbelievers are the work of Thy hands, and that they are created in Thy resemblance. Behold, O Lord, *how hell is filled with them*, to the dishonour of Thy Holy Name. *Vouchsafe to be propitiated by the prayers of Thy Church*, Thy most holy spouse, and *call to mind* Thine own compassion."

Nay, I copy from the *Record* of May 3 of this very year, the following words fromthe speech of an eminent divine of the English Church (Dr. M'Neile), delivered on behalf of the Church Missionary Society:—

"St. Paul does not appear to have had the slightest idea of any man being saved . . . except through the *knowledge* of Jesus Christ."

One remembers, it is true, that St. Paul somewhere speaks of God as the "Saviour of all men," though "specially of them that believe." But that there may be no mistake as to the speaker's meaning, he explains further as follows:—

"It is a gross misrepresentation to say that we charge the lost and ruined condition of the heathen upon their ignorance of the Gospel, which they have had no opportunity of hearing. No! it is upon their transgression of their own moral standard, their own conscience which every man bears within him, a measure of the law written in his heart. For I say again, he is a servant—not a stone, a stock, or a horse—but a servant, and did things worthy of stripes. But then he is beaten with few stripes. All is equitable. We may trust in God for that. It is more tolerable for the one servant than the other; and 'more tolerable' is the master's expression —'more tolerable'—for Tyre and Sidon than Chorazin and Bethsaida.

If 'more tolerable' be everlasting happiness, then all who have not been taught may be everlastingly happy. But if 'more tolerable' wear a different and much more painful aspect, we are compelled by our allegiance to authoritative revelation either to admit the awfully solemn truth, or to throw off that allegiance, and deny the volume which contains that statement."

Now this statement is the more significant, inasmuch as it was made not only by one of the most prominent supporters of the Church Missionary Society, in Exeter Hall, on the occasion of its anniversary, in this year of grace 1865, in the presence of the President of the Society and a great number of its friends, as well as in that of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and was allowed to pass unchallenged and uncorrected; but also because the speaker expressly insisted upon the dogma in question as the very watchword of that great Society—a Society which has been the instrument of conferring, as I believe, vast benefits upon the heathen world, notwithstanding—rather in spite of—its maintaining in theory, at all events, a principle like this, which, in my judgment, so far as it is actually maintained in fact and acted on by its missionaries, is utterly opposed to the teaching and practice of the great apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul. I say that the Church Missionary Society is committed in theory to the maintenance of this principle, that "no man can be saved except through the *knowledge* of Jesus Christ,"—that, consequently, the heathen—every one of them, men, women, and children, who have never heard of Jesus Christ, and therefore cannot have "knowledge" of Him, must be damned irrevocably and eternally—must be consigned to the pit of endless woe, and doomed to suffer everlasting burnings, though somehow they will be "more tolerable" than the flames which will prey upon others,—yet still "*everlasting* burnings," never-ending, irremediable, and therefore infinite woe. The society, I say, is committed to this, because Dr. M'Neile went on to announce that the utterance of this dreadful dogma with the most pointed distinctness was indispensable for success in their labours among the heathen. Listen to his words, as reported in the *Record.*

"Now it is of the utmost importance for the sake of our missionary cause that this question should be fairly tested and examined, and that *the alternative should be forced upon the public mind;* because I believe that *there is such a love of moderation in our English people*—that there is such a repugnance to extreme opinions and extreme measures, —that half-and-half statements are doing more injury than bold and direct scepticism itself. We have a school of compromisers more to be dreaded in the recesses of our missionary work than open sceptics. And why do I refer to these things, but because the most pointed distinctness in the initial sound is indispensable for power or plainness in the distant echo, and that, if we lose distinctness at home, we shall lose all power abroad. I say, then, that we have a school of compromisers who ought, I think, to be brought to the test, Do they believe the Bible or not?"

Now these words were accepted, it seems, by the meeting in question, as the true expression of the principles on which this great Society

seeks to evangelise the world. It was in vain that the Bishop of London had the courage to stand forward as a "moderate man," that he reminded the meeting of the apostle's lesson, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." No "cheers," at least according to the report of the *Record*, greeted these expressions of a calm and sober judgment; whereas the words of Dr. M'Neile, which I have just quoted, were received, we are told, with "loud applause," with "loud and continued applause." I must assume, therefore, incredible as it may seem, that the sentiments of Dr. M'Neile were really endorsed, as those of the Church Missionary Society itself, by this large and influential meeting, including, as I have said, his Grace the Primate of all England. Three years ago I was ridiculed by some of my critics for supposing that any great body of educated persons in England believed in these days in the literal accuracy, nay, the divine infallibility, of every historical or scientific statement of the Bible. You know how such ridicule has been answered by the astonishing fact, that 11,000 clergy of the Church of England have set their names to a declaration of their belief in that very doctrine, as well as in that of the endlessness of future torments, while the two archbishops have openly declared their adherence to those views. It seems now to be equally incredible that any great body of educated men should believe that for the success of missionary efforts "the most pointed distinctness is indispensable" in declaring that every heathen, who dies without "the *knowledge* of Jesus Christ," must be doomed to suffer endless torments,—should believe that this is, as Dr. M'Neile says, "a bold and faithful repetition of the glorious Gospel of the Grace of God." But here we have this very assertion made by a distinguished clergyman of the Church of England, in the presence of this great assembly, in the heart of the city of London, and in the middle of the nineteenth century, and the statement is received, like the others, with "loud applause"!

Out of the Church of England, however, I fear such views are equally, perhaps even still more, common. On my first visit to Natal an excellent American missionary, with whom I had spent the night, supplied me when I started in the morning with a paper of sandwiches to eat upon my way. At midday I sat down beside a stream to rest my horse and eat my luncheon; and, to while away the time, I skimmed the columns of the sheet of paper in which my food had been wrapped, and which turned out to be a *Missionary Intelligencer*. I copied from it two extracts, which I printed at the time in my book entitled *Ten Weeks in Natal*, and which will further illustrate very strikingly and painfully this part of the subject.

One passage was the report of a colporteur, who was describing to the society which employed him,—and which, therefore, since they printed his language, seem not to have objected to it—the manner in which he conducted his ministry, entering first one house and then another, and distributing according to the necessities of each. In one, for instance, he would find the people careless and negligent in divine things, and then he would talk to them about the *heathen*, and what would become of *them*, and ask what would become of them-

selves if they lived like heathen. "They would perish," he said, "*like those heathen;* and their children, about whom they thought so much, would twine about them like creepers on a gnarled oak, and they would burn—burn—burn on for ever!"

But these were the words of a missionary speaking about heathens to Europeans. The following is taken from the correspondence of a missionary, and shows the sort of language which such a man would use—and which, I fear, many a missionary does use substantially, if not so plainly—in addressing the heathens themselves. "Every hour, yea, every moment, they are dying, most of them without any knowledge of the Saviour. On whom, now, rests the responsibility? If you fail to do all in your power to save them, will you stand at the judgment guiltless of their blood?" Said a heathen child, after having embraced the gospel, to the writer, "How long have they had the gospel in New England?" When told, she asked with great earnestness, "Why did they not come and tell us before?" And then added, "My mother died, and my father died, and my brother died, without the gospel." Here she was unable to repress her emotions. But at length, wiping away her tears, she asked, "Where do you think they have gone?" I, too, could not refrain from weeping, and turning to her I enquired, "Where do *you* think they have gone?" She hesitated a few moments, and then replied with much emotion, "I suppose they have gone down to the dark place—the dark place! Oh! why did they not tell us before?" It wrung my heart as she repeated the question, "Why did they not tell us before?"

Here we have, indeed, the "most pointed distinctness" in the utterance of this doctrine! We have all heard, I suppose, of the old Bulgarian chief, who, when told that his father and mother, and all the ancestors of histribe, were burning in hell-fire, declared that he would rather go and burn with them, than live in such a gloomy heaven, with so inhuman and unjust a being as this God—a very Moloch—whom the missionary spoke of. I have heard substantially the same uttered from the mouth of a Zulu. And I do not hesitate to say that, on this particular point, the ideas of that Teuton and that Zulu were far more orthodox—far more truly Christian—than those of such a missionary, trained, though he may have been, in schools of Christian theology. It was Christian to feel there can be no happiness for me in heaven, if my friends and fellowmen, for no fault of their own, are to be eternally shut out: it was Christian to think, "Better that we should all be consumed together, and the Great Spirit live alone in his glory, than believe such things of the good and blessed God, and ascribe to him such frightful partiality."

I repeat, the persons who maintain this doctrine cannot possibly believe in it, or they would be intensely wretched during every waking moment of their lives,—that is, if they were really full of tender human feeling and brotherly kindness. But the very use of such language appears to me to be an unconscious blasphemy against the name of the Most High,—of Him who is "loving unto every man" and whose "tender mercies are over all his works," who is styled in scripture the "Faithful Creator," of whom we read that His name is

Love. "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?" He that has taught *us* to love—to love even the fallen and the outcast, or these poor ignorant degraded savages—shall *He* not love them, with a love that infinitely surpasses our own? I not only assert with the writer in *Essays and Reviews*, whom Dr. M'Neile condemns, that, "if the sacred writers have really enunciated such a doctrine as that which we are speaking of, if they have said what is so utterly opposed to the moral sense that is in man, they cannot have been inspired by God in respect of such statements." But I assert also that they would contradict by such statements other statements in the Bible, the whole general tenor of the language of that Book, and the teaching of Christ himself and his Apostles; and this contradiction would suffice to show that, in respect of these matters, there is no such "authoritative revelation" in the Bible as Dr. M'Neile supposes.

I reject, then, utterly the employment of *this* argument,—viz., that without our missions the heathen would be eternally lost,—as a reason for not taking any account of the weight of gold and silver which is thrown into the treasury of missions. But, on the other hand, it is not the outlay of a few thousands of guineas, or the expenditure of noble energies, or the sacrifice of noble lives, that is worthy of being made so much account of in this matter. There should, of course, be some proportion between the object aimed at and the means employed, as also between the amount of means expended in a given time and the results attained. But it must not be expected that in missionary work, any more than in political, naval, or military, no waste of means will be incurred,—that no pound will be spent unprofitably for want of experience, no money be lost by mismanagement, or be thrown away upon unsuccessful efforts or inefficient labourers. Allowances, in short, must be made, in this department of human labour as in any other, for errors, mistakes, infirmities, as well as for providential accidents. And then these losses must be compared with what are incurred in other great operations; for, on a different scale, the same principles apply to the one kind of expenditure as to the other. In the Crimean war, for instance, the loss of one single ship, which went down in the storm, involved a sacrifice of money, enough to have supported one hundred missionaries and their families for twenty-five years. And the sum spent in the last Kafir war was ten times as great, enough to have supported for the same period an army of ten thousand schoolmasters, so as to have changed, we might hope, the whole condition of those tribes, and prevent altogether the fears of such wars for the future.

But, it is said, *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* Multiply the work of one missionary as much as you please, and it will still amount to nothing or next to nothing. The results of missionary labour among savages are infinitesimally small; and an army of ten thousand teachers, though labouring for five-and-twenty years, would do little to raise a savage race from its barbarism. I do not, indeed, suppose that Mr. Reade would adopt this sentiment as the deliberate expression of his own opinion, though his words amount to it. Nor is it my intention to

disprove such a statement by marshalling at length a series of facts, to show the beneficial results of missions. This has been done already, I believe, to some extent by others. I rather take for granted that we all know that, in spite of all their drawbacks and defects, the work of devoted men, like many of our missionaries, if only as the heralds of civilisation, cannot but be a blessing to those among whom they toil,—as also that we all remember that we ourselves owe very much our present high state among the nations, in the first instance, to the labours of missionaries. Nay, a body of such teachers, inculcating among savages notions of the Supreme Being,—some true, and drawn from the pure living stream, which flowed in the teaching of the Great Regenerator of mankind,—some false, concocted in later ages, in creeds and church-systems, by councils of fallible men or by schools of theology, notions often, like that of which we have just spoken, at war with the moral instincts of those whom they are teaching, not because those instincts are too low and debased, but rather because they are too elevated and pure, too simple and unsophisticated,—such a body of teachers could never be utterly useless, an utter failure, in their attack on the darkness of heathenism, first, because of the portion of pure truth which is mixed up with their teachings; secondly, because of their trust in Him, who is the Supreme Educator of us all. Faith and love are never lost. If no atom out of the material universe can ever be destroyed, surely these, more *real* and more precious things, can never utterly perish. Without these, indeed, man would be but the most cunning animal. But even war, we know, with all its horrors, has been a blessing to humanity on account of the field which it has opened for *faith* and *love*, for the heroism of duty, for the exercise of manly courage, patience, endurance, perseverance, for acts of self-sacrifice. And the mission-field, in spite of all the defects, moral and intellectual, of those who have laboured in it, has been another such field, and surely with far fewer and smaller drawbacks. My object, therefore in the present lecture will not be to take the opposite side of the argument to Mr. Reade, so as to prove that such efforts have been beneficial. Rather I shall assume, as I have said, that his remarks do but express a certain feeling of disappointment, which prevails in the minds of many good men, when they contemplate the defects of missions. And I shall endeavour to point out wherein those defects should not be regarded as affording just grounds for censure or dissatisfaction, and what respects, as I think, there exist real evils in much of our mission-work, which may and ought to be remedied.

There is, in point of fact, much unfairness often practised unintentionally in judging of the results of missionary labour, besides that of judging hastily, from imperfect knowledge or too limited observation. *Too much is often expected, and in too short a time, of the missionaries.* And this is frequently the case quite as much with their friends, with those who do sympathise with their work, as with those who do not. When excellent people in England, who contribute for the support of missions, are not content without receiving by each mail touching account of some interesting incidents, some fresh report of the increase of converts and communicants, and are

disappointed to find that no very marked progress is made from month to month or even from year to year—that the foundations are being slowly laid, underground, out of sight, upon which to build in future years, when they—the donors—will be laid, it may be, in the grave, a missionary can scarcely help reporting as important facts, (and, perhaps, indeed they are such to him,) what after all appear in print as very trifling and insignificant matters, and afford not unfrequently to shrewd lookers-on the occasion for a laugh, at the credulity of friends of missions, and the delusive nature of missionary reports.

Yet societies in England must be fed, and reports therefore must be sent; and accounts of little details, which nobody would think of chronicling, as incidents worthy of notice, in any parish in England, must be forwarded regularly by the missionary to his paymasters, as tokens of progress, or at least as tokens of his own activity. And such, perhaps, as I have said, they really are. And before a sweeping judgment is passed, either on such reports or on the "Efforts of Missionaries," it may be well to consider more closely some of a missionary's primary difficulties,—at least when entering upon a comparatively new field of labour, like that in Natal or Zululand.

1. In the first place, he has little to hope for from the older people, thoroughly imbued with the habits of heathenism, with their morals debased, and their mental powers weakened, by long indulgence in the gratification of sensual appetites, which must naturally form the main sources of enjoyment, where the higher pleasures of the heart and of the intellect are to a great extent unknown. No doubt there do occur cases of heathens more advanced in life, where Christian teaching of the simplest kind has produced a benign effect,—has helped to calm the passions, to raise the hopes, to expand the affections, to kindle a living interest in the progress of their children and the welfare of their kind. I have known such cases myself: but they cannot be numerous; and they will usually be found, I imagine, among the milder spirits of the tribe, who have little influence upon the mass of the community.

Our "efforts," therefore, must be directed chiefly towards the *young*. Yet very great are our difficulties even here. For we have not to do with children removed altogether from the influence of their savage connexions,—from the idle, disorderly habits of the tribe,—from the impure practices of the native kraal. Still less have we to do with children whose training had begun at home at the mother's knee, and who afterwards, as in England, may spend the day in the village school, and return at night to find, in many cases, a parent's tender kindness and care, supplying the defects, at all events supporting the efforts, of the teacher. But here the whole work must be begun from the beginning, and must be done wholly by ourselves, and all *against the grain;* the children being brought to us at first with many tears and fears, and, when beginning to settle down under our care, disturbed continually by the visits of their people,—of mothers, sisters, brothers, friends,—who know nothing themselves of the meaning of education, of its end and object, of the benefits which the children are to gain by it,—who see only that it appears to consist in a weari-

some round of unintelligible school-performances, not unaccompanied with stripes and pains, and certainly not productive of any great present or prospective enjoyment, in the shape of eating, drinking, and other appreciable delights. It is obvious that such visits as these must greatly impede our labours. Yet this difficulty must be faced. We cannot refuse to allow of such intercourse, or the parents will consider that the children are treated like slaves, and will probably remove them altogether.

I remember how on one occasion some thirty or forty boys were brought by their parents, and delivered up to me for instruction, with a promise that they should be left in our hands for the space of five years. It had been a very difficult work to persuade the parents to confide their children to us. However, at last, one chief of some importance, and many of his head men, consented to bring their boys for education; and the chief was to send me notice of the day on which we might expect them. Week after week, however, passed, month after month, and still no message came: and always to my inquiries the answer was returned, "The children are being collected." The real reason of this delay, as we afterwards found, was the fact that the proposition had excited alarm throughout the other native tribes. It was suspected that some subtle plan was being organised to get possession of their children, and send them across the sea as hostages for the good behaviour of their parents. The efforts of the friendly chief were counteracted by the hostility of others; the mothers, especially, were furious, and the chief was obliged to defer the carrying out of his purpose, until their passions were somewhat allayed. At last the day arrived—a day for me of great delight and hope, but for them (as it seemed) a day of doom and despair. As I rode up to the Mission House, to which the boys were to be brought, I could see the train of natives, marching as usual in single file, winding along upon the distant hill; fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, the whole family connexions of the children appeared to be coming, escorting the miserable little wretches to school, with as much unwillingness almost as if they were going to take leave of them for ever. That night the fathers went to their kraals, leaving trustfully their boys in our hands. But the females would not leave us: the next day they still hung on: and I began to fear that we should never get rid of them, till at last the boys, finding things more pleasant than they expected, dismissed them of their own accord, and we were free to begin the work of education.

But what help could we have hoped to find, in case of any difficulty, by appealing, as in England we might have done, to the boy's feeling of regard for his parents or to the parents' own interference? I have known boys run away by twos or threes, or even ten or twelve together, and hide themselves in distant kraals, where they were gladly taken in by native friends, who did not favour the education-scheme, and where even their own friends could not find them, or at least pretended not to be able to find them.

II. But suppose that we have obtained our children, and quieted at last the apprehensions of their parents, and secured their confidence,

how now are we to teach them? It seems to be forgotten that we have no miraculous gift of tongues, and that those whom we are about to teach, in addition to the other faults, or, it may be, the vices of children, speak a totally different language from our own. Here then is another great element of difficulty, peculiar to the work of missionaries. We are liable, of course, to many drawbacks from the infirmities or the general inertness and inefficiency of teachers, just as much as managers of schools in England are, with this difference, that *we* cannot easily replace a defective teacher as school-managers in England may. Thus there are some who, with the best intentions, never can manage a set of boys, whom others will govern with a nod,—who never know how to be free and pleasant in the right time and way, or how to prevent a joke from degenerating into a liberty. I have known, for instance, a missionary, estimable in many respects, beseeching, and ultimately persuading, a little heathen boy to pick up his book, which the young rascal had thrown upon the floor.

Allowance, then, will have to be made for the ordinary infirmities of missionaries, for such failures as take place continually in the case of schools in England, though with much greater facilities for remedying the evil, and then we have to take account of this far greater difficulty, their want of acquaintance with the native tongue. "Teach them English," I have heard it said, "and then they will be most useful to the colonists, and derive more benefit themselves." Of course, they should be taught English; but you cannot "teach them English" in a day. In fact, you cannot teach them English thoroughly until their teacher has learnt thoroughly to speak in Zulu. You may teach them, of course, the use of English names for a pot or a kettle, very easily and readily. But such a knowledge of the English tongue as implies a power of expressing feelings and thought, a capacity for moral and religious culture—such a knowledge implies also on the part of their teacher a precedent knowledge of those forms of the Zulu tongue, idiomatic or otherwise, which correspond to these matters.

But what is the use of teaching them merely to *read* in English, when they do not understand a syllable of what they read? I do not say that it is impossible to do so; for I remember to have seen a school in Wales where the children were reading English very fairly, without in the least comprehending what they read. The absurdity of such a process is obvious; but then the Welsh children could also read Welsh, and knew what reading meant, and could amuse themselves and their parents by reading their Welsh books. To teach them to read English, even though they did not understand it, was not by any means so absurd as it would have been to teach our Zulu boys to read English before they either knew a word of the language, or had the least conception of what was the meaning of reading at all. We must begin, then, by teaching them to read in Zulu, thus leading them on by degrees to read in English. And then we are met by the difficulty that we have no books in Zulu—perhaps a primer, or an easy catechims, or a translation of some part of the Bible—but no books of instruction, such as every village-school in England possesses or may acquire from the nearest market town,—no graduated lessons,

story-books, geographies, histories, such as help to vary the monotonous routine of school-work. All these have to be prepared by the slow and painful labour of the missionaries themselves, and, when they have done their best to prepare them, will most probably be found ungrammatical and full of blunders. For how is the missionary to become all at once perfect master of Zulu? While in England a superior teacher is able to bestow all his energies upon the school itself, upon its discipline and management, preparing special lessons for his older pupils, pouring into their ears from day to day fresh stores of knowledge suited to their age, mingled, as opportunity offers, with those words of truth by which the spirit even of a child is fed as by living bread, the missionary for many months,—and, if he be not gifted with linguistic faculties, even for years, if not for his whole life long,—will still be stammering out with painful effort, and a conscious sense of his weakness, feeble, broken, half-intelligible sentences. And need I say that the same weakness will necessarily affect his more public teaching, when he stands up to address an adult congregation? —that he will deal chiefly in commonplaces, reiterating the same insipid formulæ, distrusting his own powers of expression, fearing, as it were, to step out of his depth, and shunning, even if for no other reason, the discussion of questions in science, morals, and religion, such as often engage the native mind, as they do those of our own children,—with this difference, however, that the adult native, though simple as a child in some points, is yet able to think on others like a man, and cannot be set aside or quieted, as a child, perhaps, may be, with an evasive answer? How could such a teacher venture to discuss many of the questions which will inevitably be raised in a native congregation, if he allows them freedom of speech, and which, like the questions of a child, often go to the very root of the matter, as, for instance, questions with respect to the historical truth of the Scripture accounts of the Creation, the Fall, or the Deluge, or such a query as that which a grey-haired Zulu once put to myself, "Who was the father of Satan?"

Nay, even at the very best, how hard must it be for a missionary, an English missionary more especially, who labours to express himself in a foreign tongue,—much more the tongue of a savage people, for which, it may be, grammar and dictionary do not exist at all, or exist only in a most imperfect form,—so thoroughly to master it, as to be able to convey correctly his own thought, if he has a thought, to the mind of a native! If an English parish sermon often flies over the heads of the admiring or, more frequently, slumbering rustics,—if many an English pastor, who may be excellent in many respects,—in private intercourse, at the board of guardians, in the management of his schools, or at the bedside of the sick and dying,—finds himself incapable of addressing his people *extempore* in a few simple words in public, which they shall hear and understand and lay to heart as spiritual food—how must this difficulty be increased with the missionary, who may neither have the gift of ready thought, nor that of clear expression even in English, and who must try to utter his ideas in a strange tongue! How impotent and confused must be, at the best,

his teaching! What blunders must he frequently make, unknown to himself, in seeking to express his meaning to young and old! How little can he know what the real effect of many of his words may be on those who listen to them—how they must often be to them incomprehensible, and not unfrequently grotesque and absurd, when he thinks that his discourse has been most plain and impressive!

Let me illustrate this by two examples out of my own experience, such as, I have no doubt, could be paralleled by almost any missionary.

It was very common for the missionaries of Natal to use for the word "gospel" in Zulu the expression *ivangeli*, formed, of course, in imitation of the Greek, or perhaps the Latin *evangelium*. I once asked a Christian native—in fact, my "Zulu philosopher," as he has been called—what he supposed the word to mean, and he replied at once, "a mixture or medley, from the word *vanga*, to mix;" so that, instead of the beautiful description, "glad tidings," he understood by it only a kind of olla podrida of all sorts of stories heaped together.

A much more serious mistake is the following. There is a word, *ubomi*, which is used for "meat, rather high," in fact, in an incipient state of putrefaction, which is regarded by the wild Zulus as rather a dainty. Hence, to be "eating *ubomi*" has come to be used among them as an expression for a state of great enjoyment, of supreme felicity. The early missionaries, searching for a phrase to express the blessedness of heaven, lighted upon this, and used it habitually—"eating *ubomi*,"—without any startling impropriety, to denote enjoying life, eternal life. But you will easily conceive what nonsense was made for the native ear when *ubomi* itself was taken to mean "*life*," and so was employed in such a passage as "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto—rotten meat!" Nay, what worse than nonsense was made when the same native word was used in that grand passage of St. John, "In Him was *Life*, and the *Life* was the Light of men!"

Of course, errors such as these must be made in all the early years of missions, and not only so, but in older missions also, in the teaching of younger missionaries. Many of them will be corrected by time and experience; but our preachings and translations must long be very imperfect. It is only in a later age, and in another generation, when we have sons and grandsons of our earlier converts, trained to think deeply as earnest men upon the great truths which they have been taught, that we can hope to find *them* correcting our mistakes, and completing the work which we can only begin. But the "day of small things" is needed after all for this; and our feeble "efforts" now may be attended, as we trust, with much more valuable results hereafter.

III. I pass on to point out another serious difficulty which we encounter in missionary labours. Let us suppose our boys, trained in our schools, to be now grown up to youths or young men. Here, too, it seems to be expected by many of the sanguine friends, and equally by the zealous opponents, of missions, that we are to find the ordinary rules of human experience reversed, and these young men settling down at once, each with a nice quiet wife, into exemplary

fathers of Christian families. Unfortunately for any such expectations, human nature is found to be much the same in Africa as in England; and we have to contend with the passions of youth there as elsewhere, but under far greater disadvantages. Here in England, at all events, the youth, on leaving school, is cheered by the kindly voices of home, and by the hope and prospect of honours and rewards, while he pursues his further career at the university, or in a lower rank of life, in some course of apprenticeship; and he finds in due time, it may be, a spirit congenial to his own, with whom to share the lot of married life. Our native youths leave school at a critical time, and return, as they will and must, to the native kraal. It would be folly to attempt to keep them at such an age: their passions, pent up, would only break out in some more gross and abnormal form. The parents will expect them to return: the boys will reckon upon it as their right, and will probably, if refused, take the law into their own hands, and enforce their claim by running away. Nor can we dispense with or ignore the natural affection between parents and children, if we wish to elevate, to educate, the latter in a truly human manner. If we *could* eradicate it—which, indeed, some missionaries seem almost to wish they could—we could not get on without it. No new ties to their teachers can or ought to take the place of their love to fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers. How can they learn the Christian faith—trust in, and obedience to, a Heavenly Father—if they have begun by learning to despise their earthly parents? I once had a boy brought to me by a teacher—a hopeful youth, steady at his work as a hired farm-labourer, but anxious to learn to read and write, and coming regularly to the evening-school at the end of his daily labours. But his father, a heathen savage, disapproved of it, and forbad the boy attending. I summoned his father, and had a long talk with him, saying all I could to persuade him to consent to his son's desire. But I found him unmoveable. If I had believed that the boy's soul was in danger of being lost eternally for want of that "knowledge" of which he was thus deprived, I should, perhaps, have taught him to disobey his father, and begin his course of Christian instruction by renouncing his family ties. Having no such fears, however, I could only advise the boy to obey his father, and to give up for the present the cherished wish of his heart, and trust to God's overruling providence, that some time or other, in some way or other, his dutiful act would not lose its reward. Happily, the sense of filial duty, expanded into deference to the chief, as the father of the tribe, is strong in the Zulu breast, and ought to be respected by those who come with the object of raising him in the scale of humanity.

We must, therefore, face this difficulty also, of our educated youths returning home from school, as one of the primary inevitable drawbacks upon our missionary efforts. For I need not say that, returning thus to their kraals, removed from the influence of their teachers, and coming again under that of their native friends, they are very likely to return also—for a time, at all events—to the native mode of life, to lay aside their books, to forget their lessons, to throw off their clothing, and fall back into the idle habits and the vicious practices of heathenism.

And, if they marry, whom will they marry? Not educated native girls, for probably not one such is within their reach. The parents are most unwilling to give up their girls into our hands for teaching. A few stray girls may by some accident be brought to us—the children, it may be, of paupers or refugees. But none of the better class —the true children of the tribe—have up to the present time been confided to us, or, I believe, to any of the missionaries in Natal. It will take another generation, probably, before we can hope to persuade them to this; when they see that their sons cannot be properly mated, or when those sons desire that their own children shall not suffer from the evil from which they themselves have suffered. For the present, great allowance ought to be made for this difficulty, in judging of the results of the "Efforts of Missionaries". A hopeful young man, if he has escaped, or, more probably, desires to abandon at last, the pollutions of the kraal, and to settle down as a married man, can only in most cases be coupled with a heathen woman, unclothed, untrained, uncivilised, who will certainly to some extent drag down her husband to her own lower level.

Nor will this matter, I imagine, be mended much, as some seem to expect, by removing the children from any possibility of contact with their native friends and training them in a distant sphere, or even, it may be, in England. It sounds at first very plausible. "We will take them away altogether from their homes, and their debasing vices and superstitions; we will carry them across the sea, and show them new sights, new lands, new faces. We shall not be able to speak to them, it is true, in their own tongue. But we shall have other children to mix with them, who speak the same or a kindred language; and we shall teach them English—perhaps send them on to England to complete their training, and then send them back as missionaries to their brethren."

For my own part, however, I very much doubt whether any great permanent results can be reasonably expected from such an experiment. It seems to me very much like rearing a hot-house plant, and then expecting it to live, when planted out and exposed to the cold and storms of winter. Much good might certainly result from the establishment of a central college, planted in the midst of a native population, in the very sight of the natives themselves, and with free access, at stated times and under proper regulations, to the friends of the pupils; more especially if such an institution were founded by the State itself, in the name of the Queen—I mean, of course, in such a colony as Natal, where the "savage" tribes are under British rule—and carried on under Government control and inspection, with due rewards for merit and progress, and with a view to the general elevation of the whole people, irrespective of the special labours of missionaries. But I very much doubt the expediency of training a few youths, in entire isolation from the great body of their people, to a pitch of education far above the possibility of the reach of their fellows. The cases of Bishop Crowther, and of the Kafir clergyman at the Cape who has married a Scotch wife, are quite exceptional. As a general rule, it seems to me vain to expect that boys sent to

England for education, when they return to their native land, will be found of equal use, in advancing the welfare of their people, with others who have been trained, at far less expense, in the midst of their brethren. The probability is, that at first they will find themselves painfully separated from those of their own kind; and at last, finding no wives fitted to share their higher fortunes with them—unable to associate freely with whites or with blacks—they will be only too likely to throw up their civilisation, unnaturally forced, and at best imperfectly developed, and sink down into idle and squalid heathens, as before.

It will be seen that I do not lay much stress upon rapid and great effects being produced by missionaries in their labours among savages. I should rather distrust such effects, as being unnatural, contrary to experience, and therefore most probably fallacious. What we should wish to see is, not a special forcing in a few particular instances, but a general improvement in the whole mass of a native community, by the increase of habits of industry among them, and a steady, though, it may be, slow and gradual process of intellectual, moral, and religious development.

IV. But I must yet mention one other very serious drawback on missionary labour, I mean the bad example of some of our own countrymen; though I need hardly dwell on this point, for it is one which notoriously interferes with all efforts for improvement in all countries. I need hardly say that in Natal we have many most estimable colonists, men equal in Christian worth and benevolence to any whom they have left behind in England. But in every community there must be others also of a different class; and their evil influence and corrupt example, when brought to bear on a race of savage heathens, must greatly impede the success of missionary labours among them. The chief, who brought to me his boys to be taught, once told me that he had been openly ridiculed by a whiteman in the streets of Maritzburg for so doing; and one of my native lads informed me that European workmen, employed about the station, had told him that the missionaries themselves did not believe a word of what they taught. We cannot prevent such statements reaching our converts' ears; they will hear them elsewhere, if they do not hear them on the station itself. And I need not say that I am very sensible, even painfully so, how much, in the eyes of many good men, I myself have added to this very source of difficulty, by the course which I have felt it to be my duty to take, in respect of certain long and deeply-cherished traditionary views. The more reason that we should search thoroughly into the grounds of what we teach, and teach nothing but what we entirely believe to be true,—nothing that we fear or half-suspect will not bear a close inquiry,—nothing, at all events, that we *know*, or may know, if we will, to be contrary to the plain results of Science. Then we must leave the rest with God, whose work after all is that which we are striving, each according to our light, to do. And sure we may be that honest, earnest, self-sacrificing work, even should it take a mistaken direction, will never be wholly spent in vain.

It is not a little mortifying, however, when we have perhaps been speaking with a natural pride about our dear motherland, and fondly expatiating to a body of natives listening around upon the power and greatness of England, upon the love and zeal of English Christians, who have sent us out to minister the word of life to their brethren, to have some shrewd face turned up with the remark, that such a white-man had sold a wagon for £60 to a native chief, which turned out to be a rotten, one or that another had lied, and another been seen drunk; and to find the whole party, one after another, quoting their separate grievances, real or supposed, received at the hands of English Christians. Sometimes, of course, these complaints are greatly exaggerated; sometimes the natives are themselves to blame. But it would be very unfair in judging of the "Efforts of Missionaries among Savages" not to take account of this fact also, that the imperfections and faults, often the vices, of our own fellow-countrymen are very serious impediments to the success of mission work.

v. Nor is it just to ascribe to missionary teaching what after all is very commonly only, or chiefly, the consequence of coming into contact with civilisation. It is very common, for instance, to speak of "Mission Kafirs" as greatly inferior to the untutored savage. But who are these "Mission Kafirs?" Very frequently men whom the missionary himself would altogether disown as members of his true flock, mere hangers-on upon the mission-station, who have resorted to it for reasons of their own, for the sake of protection, convenience, or gain; and whom the missionary has not thought it necessary to expel, or whom, perhaps, he actually has expelled. With many, in fact, a black man in a coat and trousers passes at once for a "Missionary Kafir." Yet, of course, in a colony like ours, there are many natives quite unconnected with missions, who have long adopted to some extent a European costume, and indeed are required by law to do so whenever they enter one of the chief towns, *i.e.*, to wear some piece of clothing down to the knee,—an order with which a simple native from the kraal supposed that he had complied by appearing one day at our station, as I was informed, dressed in his native tails, surmounted by a crinoline, or what I believe ladies understand by the name of a skeleton-skirt. It was at any rate a cool and airy style of dress, and far more comfortable, no doubt, to the natives than a tight-fitting pair of trousers, and, it may be added, far more healthy. For we little consider, when we lay down peremptorily such laws of clothing, how seriously they must affect the health and shorten the lives of a savage community. We know how much they suffer from other baneful results of coming into contact with civilisation—what diseases they contract from dissolute whitemen—how they perish from being taught the use of strong drink. But perhaps we have less considered how the very clothing, with which we teach them to cover their nakedness, becomes too frequently not only the haunt of vermin, and the cause of skin-diseases, but the source of pulmonary disorders, sickness, and since; when the *one* pair of trousers or the single jersey is not only never washed, as it is never mended, but when damp with showers is obliged to be worn unchanged, and the wet garment is habitually dried

upon the person, instead of the naked limbs being dried by the hut fire. I have often thought that God has given to the savage his coloured skin as a clothing, which he had better not change too soon for European habiliments.

However, there are many who approximate in appearance to civilised men, and, having been formerly employed in service or by traders, have now settled near a mission station, and may be found attending school and chapel, but whom the missionary himself would point out as the black sheep of his flock, and for whose misconduct it would be as unfair to make his teaching responsible as to charge the rector of an Englis h parish with all the faults and vices of all his parishioners.

VI. Let all these things be taken into account before you attempt to form a judgment as to the real results of the "Efforts of Missionaries among Savages." And then let it be remembered that it has taken centuries of civilising influences to bring us up in England to our present condition, and that condition itself, with all our enormous advantages from the experience of the past and the example of other civilised nations, being in some respects very disappointing and discouraging. "What is the use," says Mr. Reade, "of a Christian mission, if a man goes to church in the morning, and burns a witch alive in the afternoon?" But two centuries ago some of the best men in England did this, men eminent for learning and piety; and I am not quite sure that there are not some among us, who would even burn a heretic now if they could.

Nay, were a visitor from another planet to drop suddenly among us, and to take up his abode for a few months with one of the London clergy, and then put on paper his thoughts as to the effect of Christian teaching on a civilised community, from the outward evidences which met him as he walked by day or night in the innumerable lanes and alleys, where live the masses of this great community, he would probably find enough of drunkenness and prostitution—enough of all forms of vice and wretchedness—enough of selfish extravagance on the one hand, and of degraded ignorance and misery on the other,—to make it just as reasonable for him to express strong doubts as to the effect, not merely of the Christian ministry, but of all educational efforts, of all measures of social improvement, upon the inhabitants of this metropolis. And as to the country districts of England, we read as follows in the report on the Staffordshire Factories, which was quoted in a leader of the *Times* of April 24th.

"In most cases the modesty of female life gradually becomes a byeword instead of a reality, and they sing unblushingly before all while at work the most disgusting songs [even as Zulu boys or girls may sing at their play]. Of the thousands which I have met with or known as working, I should say that one in every four, who had arrived at the age of twenty, had had an illegitimate child. Several have had three or four."

In short, as the *Times* justly observes:—

"The well springs of domestic virtue must be poisoned,—the labours of clergymen, schoolmasters, and scripture-readers are thwarted and defeated,—the power of benevolence and religion itself is neutralised,

—where decency is habitually outraged;"—[as it is in the overcrowded dwellings of England quite as much as in the Zulu hut].

Yet, with all these deficiencies, we none of us doubt that educational influences have done very much to improve the state of things in England, though falling far short, it may be, as yet of our desires. And in like manner there are abundant signs of the beneficial effect of missions upon savages, though I readily allow, and this brings me to the second portion of my address this evening, that, besides the unavoidable drawbacks to which I have been hitherto referring, there is great room for improvement in respect of our missionary labours.

Mr. Reade has spoken more than once of "idle, ignorant, knavish" missionaries. And, of course, such characters may and do exist in the wide extent of the mission field, as well as in other walks of life. An idle or dishonest missionary, however, is amenable to his ecclesiastical superior or to the society which employs him. And I need not dwell further on this particular point, which belongs rather to the former category of defects incidental to our work from the mere imperfection of the human agency employed in it, unless, indeed, it could be shown that missionaries are habitually "idle and knavish," so that the fault belongs to the system—a charge which no candid person, I imagine, will think it right to make against them.

I. But on the subject of "ignorance," I fear, and want of due fitness and preparation for the work, a great deal might be said. The work of a missionary, when regarded in a true light as that of endeavouring not to save a few individual souls from everlasting burnings, but to raise a whole race to the true dignity of man, as a child of God, a being endowed with intellectual, moral, and spiritual faculties, is one of the highest, most interesting, most ennobling, than can engage our powers. Yet this great work is left for the most part in the hands of men comparatively ignorant and illiterate, with narrow views and limited education,—earnest in spirit it may be, simple and pure in life, unwearied in industry,—yet greatly deficient in some of the primary qualities, which go to make up the true ideal of a missionary. Of course I am referring chiefly to Church of England missions; though Mr. Reade, I observe, speaks of the incompetence of "the Wesleyans of the Gambia," as well as "with rare exceptions of the Church of England missionaries on the western cost of Africa." And I do say that the Church of England, instead of sending her best men to this grand but difficult work, has been too commonly content to take her missionaries from a lower class of catechists, men who might have been usefully employed under clergy of higher mind and more liberal education, but who are quite unfit to be placed in sole charge of the responsible duties of a mission station. In the mission work among the natives of Natal I have had the aid of some able and excellent fellow-labourers, who, though not university men, have yet from various sources, (from professional or other training), derived the requisite amount of culture and mental discipline. Bishop Gray has complained that I have not multiplied the number of mission stations in Natal. Partly my want of means has prevented me from doing this, but principally my want of men, of men with large hearts, culti-

vated minds, and generous views, fit to be entrusted with such work. Of course, if the object aimed at is chiefly to multiply the professors of Church doctrine,—if men are wanted merely to cram the native mind with creeds and catechisms, and raise a number of human parrots, repeating dogmatic phrases and formularies,—it might not be so difficult to find suitable instruments; more especially as the income and position of a missionary are far superior to what such teachers would probably be likely ever to attain at home. At all events, it would not be difficult to find men willing to undertake such work in Natal, where the inducements are not balanced by an oppressive and sickly climate, or by extreme cold and severe privations, of by dangers to be apprehended from the savages themselves.

I need hardly say that for such inferior missionaries the work of mastering the native tongue, difficult as it is for all who have not peculiar natural gifts, is rendered still more difficult, when they have never learned another language than their own native English, and have not even learned that correctly, but are now set down, perhaps for the first time in their lives, to the study of grammar. Nor need I say how futile must be the expectation which some indulge, that missionaries generally shall be able to combine with efficient labours among the heathen the charge also of European congregations! The thing is simply impossible. The European congregations, of course, may be served; it may be right that they should be; that is quite another question; but then the native work must, in most cases, go to the wall. When the missionary has to gallop off to his English services on Sunday, leaving his native flock untended on the very day when they would naturally come most about him to talk with him, to question him, to listen to him, (as I have often known them do for hours together), it is obvious that even the work of an experienced teacher must greatly suffer from the interruption. But it is easy to conjecture what the result must be in the case of one, who has not yet acquired a ready command of the native tongue, when the excuse is thus given for neglecting those studies and that practice, in which the very strength of his labours consists.

11. Again, it is a great defect in our present system of missions, that the missionaries generally are not *practical* men; that they have no knowledge of any practical science, such as that of medicine, or of any mechanical art, or even of agriculture. They are mostly mere theologians, interpreters of Scripture, or teachers of catechisms or creeds. This is a very serious drawback upon such missions as ours, and is not easily remedied, because so few of the English clergy are practised in any of those arts and sciences, which, however desirable, are not absolutely needed for their ministry in England. Yet the advantage resulting from the possession by a missionary of medical science, or practical skill of any kind, is incalculable,—still more when the two are united in one person, as is strikingly the case in the instance of one of our missionaries (the Rev. Dr. Callaway), whose work has in consequence been eminently successful, and would by *itself* be a sufficient answer to any doubts that might be entertained as to the benefits arising, or likely to arise from the "Efforts of Missionaries

among Savages." It might be supposed that it is enough that some *subordinate* should have such qualifications, and the missionary merely superintend his work, and devote himself to the higher duties of his spiritual office. But this is a mistake. In such a case as that of the Zambesi mission, where the whole party was plunged into the centre of South Africa, far away from the bounds of civilisation—I say nothing as to the prudence of such a step—and therefore *must* hold together while life or health lasts, this arrangement might suffice. But in a colony like that of Natal, where skilled labour commands very high prices, and temptations of the strongest kind must be held out continually to any intelligent layman, who is not committed irrevocably to mission work, to employ his powers more profitably for himself and his family, than the moderate remuneration of the mission fund will allow, it is vain to hope to retain very long the services of a really efficient mechanic. If his zeal does not flag amidst the monotonous routine and the many discouragements of the mission work, yet it cannot be expected that he will continue to work on in a dependent position when he has opportunities on every side of doubling or trebling his income, of buying land for himself, building a house, and settling with his family in complete independence. I know this difficulty by painful experience; and I have learned by yet more painful and costly experience that inferior mechanical agents are worse than useless, and had better be dispensed with altogether.

Yet without industrial occupation for the natives of some kind or other, it is impossible that any mission station can be carried on to any good purpose. It remains, therefore, for the missionary to do the best he can with such knowledge or power as he may possess for practical work. And here again it is found that inferior men are far more likely to make difficulties, as to engaging themselves in manual work for the instruction of their native converts, than others of a higher class,—such, for instance, as the late noble Bishop Mackenzie and his fellow-labourers, who would have thought it no derogation to their position as gentlemen, or to their office as clergymen, to handle, if need be, the tailor's scissors, the shoemaker's last, the carpenter's square, the mason's trowel, the compositor's stick, or the farmer's plough. I see, for instance, that Bishop Gray, in his recently published journal of his *Visit to Natal*, has inserted in it the following passage, p. 8:—

"Walked up to the camp before breakfast, which is a kind of native suburb, where a coloured mission congregation is located. At present it is in the hands of the Dutch Church, who employ a German, formerly employed by Bishop Colenso at Ekurkanyeni. All agree that this man is doing a good work amongst the natives. As I drew nigh to his mud cottage, he was summoning his first congregation to worship in his mud chapel, by some sacred music played upon a trumpet. Had some little talk with him. He told me that he had been upon the list of the S. P. G.; that the Bishop had promised to ordain him after six months' trial if he gave satisfaction; that on one occasion, when preaching on the subject on eternal punishment, the Bishop stopped him; that shortly afterwards he told him that apostles

had supported themselves while preaching, and asked him if he would make bricks; that he undertook to do this, but afterwards complained that he had no *spiritual work* given him to do; and he and the Bishop parted. I tell this story as he told it to me. *There may be two sides to it (!)* But it is only fair to this good man to say that all speak well of him and of his work."

Now, I certainly do not think it necessary to defend myself from all or any of the charges or insinuations, which Bishop Gray has thought it right to put in print against me upon mere hearsay,—after a "little talk," as he says, with one of the parties concerned,—if even this were the place or occasion for it. But, as he says, there "may be two sides" to the story; and as it illustrates the present subject, I will give some explanation of the case in question. This German had been originally a trumpeter, I believe, in the Prussian army, but had lately been employed by a missionary body of his own (the Lutheran) Church among the tribes of south-eastern Africa. He came to me saying that his own body had declined his further services, because of his holding what some would call "heretical," but what in England are usually called "evangelical," views on the subject of the sacraments,—a fact which Bishop Gray does not mention. As I found him to be a good, earnest man, with a fair knowledge of Zulu, I was glad to take him on trial for six months; and he no doubt would have been glad to secure the position and the income of an English clergyman. But I found him unsuited and incompetent for the work for which I wanted him. He could not manage a class of school-boys; for it was he who "besought" the little Zulu scamp to pick up his book. So I tried him with adults; and believing that he would be likely to do as much good by teaching them to work diligently on a week-day, as by preaching to them on the Sunday about Adam's sin and eternal perdition, I certainly did set before him the example of St. Paul, who wrought with his own hands as a tentmaker, as well as that of one of our missionaries, who had taught one of the native boys to print; and I thought that he might have been of use in superintending a set of natives, who were employed in making bricks for the erection of part of the mission premises. But he had no "spiritual work," it seems, given him to do!—as if his hours, spent from morning to night among such labourers, might not have been made abundantly conducive to "spiritual work;" as if many an opportunity would not have been given for ministering to them the word of life, "in season and out of season,"—for checking their evil passions, encouraging their industry, strengthening their better principles, and lifting up their thoughts from earth to heaven! "And so we parted!"

III. Bishop Gray, you will see, refers to my having once "stopped" this missionary when he was preaching on the subject of "eternal punishment." I remember well the occasion, when he startled and horrified my people—who certainly had never heard such a doctrine from me—by telling them that by reason of Adam's sin the whole race of man had incurred the doom of eternal perdition, and even the newborn babe deserved to be consigned to the everlasting burnings.

The people themselves immediately questioned the truth of this doctrine: and I, of course, told them that they were *not* to believe this. As we have seen, the inculcation of such doctrines is by no means confined to men of defective training and a limited education. But there is this difference, that, although many clergymen in England may profess to hold these views, and may from time to time make even a passing allusion to them in their sermons, yet they very seldom, indeed, express them in plain words, or dwell upon them, in all their details, in the ears of an educated congregation. Their hearers would in most cases be revolted by such teaching: nay, their own sense of equity would be revolted. And, accordingly, Dr. M'Neile laments that "love of moderation in our English people,"—that "repugnance to extreme opinions and extreme measures,"—by which many even of the (so-called) evangelical clergy are led to make "compromises" on this question,—to avoid speaking with "the most pointed distinctness,"—to make only "half-and-half statements," which "are doing more injury than bold and direct scepticism itself." It is otherwise, however, on a mission station, where teachers of narrow views, as we have seen, may and do dilate, as they please, upon such points. It is a very painful fact that men should have gone out—in the name of our National Church, which (as we now know from the highest authority) does *not* maintain the doctrine of the endlessness of future torments—still less maintains Dr. M'Neile's dogma of the endless punishment of all the heathen—to teach these things to the ignorant savages—that the attempt should still be made in this way to frighten them into believing, or retaining belief, in the creeds of Christendom, instead of seeking to draw them nearer—"to win," as the Bishop of London said, "by words of love those who may be wandering away from the the truth"—to the bosom of their Father and their God. There are not a few well-meaning missionaries, who will complain, no doubt, that my own publications on the Pentateuch have reached even the ears of their converts, and unsettled their minds, and made their work more difficult. I, on the other hand, complain that there are many, who with the best intentions have yet poisoned the native mind with their teachings of the kind just described—have made it difficult for the real "glad tidings," the message of their Father's Love, to reach them—have, in fact, unconsciously blasphemed (as I have said) the holy name of God, by these representations, so that the heathen can receive only a distorted view of His character, and are repelled from coming to the knowledge of the truth. Forgetting, or ignoring, or more frequently never having realised at all, the fact, that there is one Almighty Father of all mankind, who is the "Faithful Creator," the "Saviour of all men,—who is present by His Spirit in the hearts of these Zulus as surely as He is present in our own,—from whom they have received that measure of light which they even now possess, and for which alone He holds them responsible,—Missionaries of narrow views seek not unfrequently to make that very light itself to be darkness, and try to teach their converts to renounce altogether the religious notions in which they have been reared, instead of meeting them, as it were, by the way, upon the common ground of our humanity, which a Divine

Life has quickened, and showing how far what they have hitherto believed is really true, how far in their ignorance they have mingled falsehood with truth. They come to them, in short, as if they were beings from another world, commissioned by Divine authority to override or overrule all their questionings, and doubts, and prejudices, being utterly groundless and worthless; telling them that in their heathen state there is nothing good in them, that they are utterly fallen and corrupt, all their thoughts evil, and all their practices abomination in God's sight; instead of being ready, like St. Paul, to take for a text a heathen poet's noble utterance, "For we are Jove's offspring," or an altar raised to the unknown God as the ground of a Christian discourse, "Him, whom ye ignorantly worship, I declare unto you."

For among the Zulus, as among other nations, God has not left Himself without witness, in those thoughts which are stirred mysteriously within the depths of their inner being, as well as in the blessings poured upon them from without, "the rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness." I know that there are those who say that degraded tribes of human beings exist, which have no spark of religious life whatever. It may be so: I cannot contradict the assertions of those, who declare from their own personal knowledge that so it is—of missionaries or of travellers, who profess to have closely investigated the question, and who have expressed deliberately this conviction. If it be so, however, I should say that such tribes as these would scarcely deserve to be ranked with human beings. They could only be regarded as specimens of man as yet undeveloped; where the bodily organism of the human frame was imperfect, as it is with idiots, or was not yet advanced to that stage which allows of the higher exercise of the spirit's higher powers, as is the case, we may suppose, with infants, or, at least, with embryos. But I confess that I very much doubt the accuracy of the statement. I doubt if the travellers or the missionaries, who have made such assertions, have ever mastered so thoroughly the native tongue, or mixed so long and intimately with the native mind, as to be competent to pronounce such a judgment. I doubt if they have been able—or willing if able—to sit down, hour by hour, in closest friendly intercourse with natives of all classes, and in the spirit of earnest, patient, research, with a full command of the native language, have sought to enter, as it were, within the heart, and search for the secret characters of light, which may be written by God's own finger there.

Dr. Livingstone says of the natives of South Central Africa: "On questioning intelligent men among the Bakwena, as to their former knowledge of good and evil, of God, and the future state, they have scouted the idea of any of them ever having been without a tolerably clear conception on these subjects. Respecting their sense of right and wrong, they profess that nothing we indicate as sin ever appeared to them as otherwise, *except the statement that it was wrong to have more wives than one;* and they declare that they spoke in the same way as they do now of the direct influence exercised by God, in giving rain in answer to the prayers of the rain-makers, and in granting deliver-

ance in times of dangers, before they ever heard of white-men. The want, however, of any form of public worship, or of idols, or of formal prayers or sacrifices, makes both Kafirs and Bechuanas *appear* as among the most godless races of mortals known anywhere."

So, too, among the Zulus, there is, first, a knowledge of a Creator, whom they call *Unkulunkulu*, "the Great-Great One;" and I may mention, as a fact which has not yet, I believe, been made known to men of science, that all along the eastern coast of Africa, as my friend Dr. W. H. Bleek informs me, "This same word is used with the same meaning, though in abbreviated forms, *e. g. Mulungulu* in Inhambane, *Mulungu* in the Ki-kamba and Ki-nika languages, *Mlungu* at Cape Delgado, *Mulugo* or *Muluko* in the Makua language, *Murungu* at Sofala, *Murungo* or *Morungo* at Sena and Tette, *Mungu* in the Suaheli, and *Mungo* in the Pokomo. It would, of course, be a bold thing to identify this last from *Mungo* with the Zulu *Unkulunkulu*, if we could not follow up the gradual abbreviation through so many different stages. But, as it is, there is no doubt that from Natal to the borders of the Gallas country, this very same word has by the most different authorities (English, Portuguese, Germans, French, etc.) been noted as the nearest representative of our word "God." And even in Otyi-herero (spoken on the west coast, to the north of Great Namaqua land), a cognate word is used, viz., *Om-kuru;* and among the Timnehs of Sierra Leone (whose language has by the late Bishop Vidal been recognised as related to the Kafir) the name of God is Kuruh; though the identity of this last word with the South African names cannot yet be considered as an established fact."

Again, the Zulus distinctly recognise the existence of the double-heart, or, in the language of St. Paul, the constant strife of the flesh and spirit. They speak of the *ugovana*, which urges them to hate, kill, steal, commit adultery, and the *unembeza*, which bids them leave all this.

Further, they believe evidently in another life, since they make their prayers to their dead ancestors, the spirits of their tribe.

Thus we have seeds of religious truth, already planted by the Divine Hand in the minds of these natives; and our business is surely to cherish and prune the plants that have grown from those seeds,—if need be, to cut them down almost to the ground,—but not coarsely and violently to root them up altogether.

IV. Great evil, also, is caused, as I conceive, by those who insist, in their teaching of the heathen, upon the absolute infallibility of the Scriptures—a doctrine which happily is not held or taught by our National Church. Yet there are missionaries, and even missionary Bishops, who, while holding their offices by letters-patent from the Queen, as Bishops of the Church of England, will still violate their duty to the Church of which they are ministers, by misrepresenting its teaching on this point, and by laying down this doctrine to the ignorant heathen,—not as their own private view, which they were at liberty to do within the bounds of her communion, but—as the positive teaching of that Church itself, which, as we now know distinctly, it is not. I need not say that, with the daily increase of scientific know-

ledge among all classes, and with the facts that the first principles, at all events, of Geology and Astronomy, are taught in many of our schools, the maintenance of this dogma will soon become impossible for any persons of ordinary education in England. I have said in "*many* of our schools," because I suppose that no clergyman, who holds at present the traditionary view, will think it right to allow a school-teacher to discharge his duty faithfully, and explain the elementary truths of geological science to the children under his charge, when he knows that they will flatly contradict the accounts of the Creation and the Deluge, which he himself will read to them in church on Sunday, as the Word of God infallibly true. Are we, then, to perpetuate the same wrong in our schools set up among the heathen, the wrong I mean—rather the *sin*—of either deliberately keeping back from them such knowledge of His works as the Great God has already granted to *us*, that we may be stewards of His own good gifts for others, or else of distorting the plain results of Science, in order to prevent the discovery of their clashing with the statements of the Bible or the Prayer-Book? It would be a miserable, short-sighted, policy to do so; for the natives would soon learn from others what we did not choose to teach them ourselves. At all events, I have done my best to secure that the simple facts revealed by Modern Science,—some of which, as Dr. Temple has justly said on a recent occasion, are utterly irreconcilable with Scripture statements, if taken as announcing literal historical truth,—shall not be kept back from the heathen with whom my own lot has been cast in the district of Natal.

v. Once more, I believe that the course which the great body of missionaries have taken on the question of polygamy is a very serious impediment to the progress of our work. Here again, without any authority from the Church of which they are ministers, there are many of the missionary clergy, and even Bishops, of the Church of England, who have laid down the law, that every convert admitted into the Christian Church shall put away all his wives but one, if he had more than one, before baptism. It would be reasonable if they said, "You need not be baptised at all; you may be good men without being formally received into the Church, as there have been good men of old who were never baptised, and who had more wives than one, yet lived faithful lives. It is written in the Bible of the polygamist Abraham, from the mouth of Jehovah himself, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah to do justice and judgment;" and you, with your many wives, must try to do the same. As a Christian, you cannot take more, but you must not be false to those you have already taken; and to the obligations you have already contracted lawfully, according to your own native customs. You must not, in the selfish hope of saving your own soul, commit an act of wrong to any of your wives and children."

It would take me too long to discuss this question now. But I have expressed my views plainly and fully on the subject in a pamphlet, a copy of which I lay upon the table, and beg leave to present to the library of this society. I believe that the subject is one of very

grave importance, and that it has not yet received that degree of attention which it merits from English philanthropists and English Christians. I am convinced that the present practice, not indeed of all, but of almost all, missionaries, in dealing with the question of polygamy, as it exists already in converts from heathenism, is a most effectual barrier against the great body of a polygamist people, like that in Natal or Zululand, coming even within the reach of the teaching of the missionary.

I have now mentioned some of the principal defects, as they appear to me, which might and ought to be remedied in the missionary proceedings of the present day. Mr. Reade would probably admit, on consideration, that his censures were really valid chiefly in reference to such defects. But it may now be asked, If so much difficulty, necessary or accidental, attends the work of missions, why engage in them at all? I answer, that the mere difficulty of the work is no reason why, if it lies in the path of duty, we should not engage in it; rather, I should say, it is an Englishman's reason for entering at once upon it, and a Christian's reason for persevering in it, with the confident assurance that God's strength will, in His own good time and way, be made perfect in our weakness.

It will be plain, however, by this time that, when I speak of the work of missionaries among savages, I do not mean by it merely teaching them to read the Bible, or to use a liturgy, or to repeat a catechism or a creed. Happily, no one can attempt to translate the Athanasian creed into the simple Zulu tongue: we can find no words to express the nice refinements of the Greek original, which are but imperfectly represented even by the English equivalent. So it may be a century, at least, before it will be possible to raise that old war-song of the ancient Church in the ears of a Zulu congregation; and by that time, let us hope, it may no longer be the source of bitter strife, heart-burning, and separation, in England. By that time we may have learned to put our trust in God—the Living God—and in His power to maintain His own truth in the world, instead of in man's poor devices of chruch-censures and anathemas, inhibitions, suspensions, deprivations, excommunications. Nor is it possible to convey into the Zulu tongue the complex phrases of our Prayer Book, the result of ages of high civilisation, and expressed in a language which is itself enriched with the spoils of time. I have endeavoured to do my duty in this respect: I have translated a great part of the Church Prayer Book; and I know that, though I have rendered it on the whole correctly, it is simply in many parts unintelligible to the native—some long circumlocution labouring to express a single pregnant formula, and making utter nonsense, as it falls on his ear. But what mother in her senses would take her young child to her knee, and make it lisp its first words of prayer in a Church Collect? She might as well teach it to pray in an unknown tongue.

So, then, we must teach the Zulus to pray, but in such simple forms as a child might use. We must teach them Christian Faith and Practice; but, surely, it will suffice, at least for this generation, if we

teach it, as it was taught by Christ Himself, in the Lord's Prayer and in the Sermon on the Mount, without perplexing them with the difficulties and discussions of dogmatic theology. Such teaching as this they receive with joyful readiness; they imbibe it as mother's milk. "Our Father which art in Heaven!" *There* is the answer to the thoughts, which have been stirring in their own hearts already—while they have been feeling in the darkness after Him, if haply they might and Him, who was not far from any one of them. We have no difficulty in teaching them to use these words, or to cherish the precious ideas of God's love, protecting care, and faithfulness, connected with them. It is only when we try to indoctrinate them with the mysteries of the creeds that our own difficulties, as well as theirs, begin—unless, indeed, we are prepared to silence at once their questionings as idle and profane, or to lay down to them, with Bishop Gray, the law—"What the Catholic Church, during the first thousand years of her history, declared to be, or received as, the true faith, that *is* the true faith, and that we receive as such."

And so, too, it is comparatively easy to teach them to read the Bible reverently and devoutly—not, indeed, all parts of it, for there are portions which, although he may profess to regard them as the infallible eternal Word of God, no clergyman ever thinks it necessary or expedient to read and explain to his flock,—but such parts as are suited to them, the devotional Psalms, the simpler prophetical passages, the more edifying portions of the Old Testament history, the account of the life and death of our Lord. If I am asked, "Do you not mean then to put the whole Bible in their hands?" I answer, "Yes—in good time—when we know how to translate it." And I may say that here also I *have* done my best to provide the natives of Natal with the means of mastering for themselves the contents of our sacred books, having been the first to translate and publish in their tongue the books of Genesis and Exodus, as well as the whole of the New Testament. But I certainly shall not give them the Bible without teaching them how to read it—with the understanding, as well as with the heart—so as to draw from it divine instruction, "the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby," without, therefore, feeling bound to believe, on pain of eternal perdition, that every statement which they find in it, merely because found in it, is the "Word of God, infallibly true." How can I do this in face of the facts, which we have been already considering, that the most elementary scientific knowledge which, as stewards of the manifold gifts of God, we *must* impart to them, will be directly at variance with the Scripture accounts of the Creation, the Fall, and the Deluge? Or how, when the very mission, on which I am sent, is to root out their heathen superstitions, among which one of the most dire is a firm belief in witchcraft and sorcery, can I go with the Bible in my hands, and bid them receive the stories of witchcraft and demonology, which they find recorded there—the Witch of Endor, Satan's appearing in the Courts of Heaven—as "God's own Word, infallibly true?" Most reasonably did a native council in New Zealand argue, as I saw it reported lately in the *Record and Guardian*, though quoted formerly by myself in my second volume,

that "witchcraft must be punished by stoning". "If God had commanded it, it must be right." "If it was right *then*, it could not be wrong *now*." And it is a very serious question, as it seems to me, for those ministers of our great National Church, who will still maintain, amidst the light of modern civilisation, the dogma of the Infallibility of Scripture, to consider how far upon their heads lies the responsibility of the murder committed, in our own native land, within the last three years, upon a wretched old man, who was done to death by an English mob as a wizard in Essex. Are we never to tell the people, whether Englishmen or Zulus, the plain honest truth? Mr. Lecky, in his noble work just published, *The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, while defending the English clergy of former days from those charges of inhuman cruelty, which blackened the characters of others, has yet said, with that sincerity and faithfulness, by which his work is distinguished throughout, as well as by moderation and fairness, "It is indeed too true, that the Bishops of the Anglican Church contributed much to the enactment of the laws against witchcraft,—that the immense majority of the clergy firmly believed in the reality of this crime, and that *they continued to assert and defend it, when the great bulk of educated laymen had abandoned it*." (Chap. i. p. 135.) And he says, also, that "the scepticism on the subject of witches was commonly branded as a phase and manifestation of infidelity," (p. 136.) Yet we are now thoroughly ashamed of the part taken by so many of our forefathers—even good men and true, like Judge Hale—in maintaining this particular phase of traditionary belief, as, I doubt not, the next generation will be equally ashamed of the violence, with which, in this age, in which we live, some other traditionary views have been maintained, which stand in direct contradiction with the plain results of Modern Science.

For me, however, I feel it to be a matter of bounden duty, not a matter of choice, to communicate to the heathen world those facts of Modern Science of which we ourselves are assured, so far as their simple minds are able to receive them; and this includes, I need hardly say, the geological conclusions as to the vast age of the world, the great antiquity of man, the impossibility of a universal deluge. The knowledge which I possess of these would make it sinful in me to teach any heathen brother to believe in the historical truths of the scriptural accounts of the Creation and the Flood, as other scientific reasons make it equally impossible to teach them the scriptural story of the Fall, and other parts of the Bible narrative, as historical facts. For I hold myself, as a Christian missionary, to be, as I have said, "a steward of the manifold gifts of God" for these my brethren. I regard it as an essential part of Christianity to believe that "God is with us" still, as He was of old and as He has been all along, instructing and enlightening the hearts of His children, guiding and governing the ages as they go, and educating, in His own wise way, by wondrous influences from without and from within, the human race in the clearer knowledge of Himself. The true missionary goes, as the "heir of all the ages," to convey to his fellowman whatever blessings he himself possesses, as the good gifts of the Father of

all. And thus every white man, who teaches the natives industry and cleanliness, and the arts of civilised life, may be in fact, as many a white man is, a true minister of God's Love to his fellows.

A civilised government also, such as ours in Natal, might do much, by establishing a system of schools, under government control and inspection, in connexion with each of the principal tribes, to advance the welfare of the savage population. Our natives pay, and have paid for many years contentedly, a hut-tax of seven shillings per hut, which adds now to the revenue a sum of £20,000 a-year, of which £5000 has been expressly reserved by the Queen to be devoted to their improvement. I believe that this fact is unique in the history of the British Colonies. I should greatly rejoice to hear that this sum was devoted wholly to the establishment of state schools, irrespective of any religious body, in which the elements of an ordinary education may be given, to be carried on further, in the case of the sons of chief men or more promising lads, in a central institution, still under government control and direction. If a band of—I say not ten thousand, but even—one hundred intelligent laymen, with some knowledge of industrial arts, were scattered over the land in this way as schoolmasters, under the inspection of the magistrates, but not coming themselfes with magisterial power to enforce the law and to punish crime, coming rather as friends and counsellors and comforters of the chief and his tribe, it is impossible to say what good might not result; not merely by the gradual elevation of the whole native community, but by the kindly intercourse which would thus take place between the natives themselves and their children, and these commissioned servants of the Queen. There would be no difficulty here in having the boys brought to school; probably, even the girls might be easily gained; for the Queen's word is the highest law with our natives, as with other savage tribes, and there is no fear of their not recognising implicitly the Royal Supremacy, in this as well as other matters. The chiefs would take an interest in seeing with their own eyes the progress of the work among their people, especially in seeing that their own boys were able to read to them their little books of science or history, and to write for them their secret thoughts and messages. Thus the business would be done systematically, instead of being left, as now, to accidental missionary efforts; it would be done thoroughly and effectually, instead of being hindered, as now, by sectarian strifes and jealousies. And are we not bound by every sense of duty, to do as much as this for them? Must we allow them to suffer all the evil consequences of contact with civilisation, while as a nation we hold the land in our hands and take the taxes of the people, without also, as a nation, seeking to impart to them that chief blessing of civilisation, the benefit of education? Or must we sit, as a nation, coldly by, and allow the religious sects to squabble on about their own peculiar differences, while the people are perishing still, as far as this life is concerned, in heathen ignorance, idleness, vice, and superstition?

Yet, after all, there would be room for the missionaries. Among these youths, so taught and trained, there would be some, we may

hope—nay, we are sure, from past experience in the whole history of man—whose hearts would be touched with the divine desire to be themselves the teachers and educators of their brethren, not only as regards the things of this life, but as regards the life to come. And the native community itself, thus raised from a lower level, would desire to hear the message of life from the lips of these teachers. Such a man is my Zulu catechist, who signs himself William Bishopo, not meaning to say that he is Bishop, but implying that he still clings to me, as a clansman in Scotland clings to his chief. I have printed some of his letters to me, since I came to England, in a pamphlet, *Remarks on the Bishop of Capetown's Proceedings*, a copy of which I lay upon the table for the library of this Society. But the last letter which I received from him, and which has not been printed, is as follows, and will show, I think, some proof of the beneficial result of "Missionary Efforts among Savages". I translate it literally from the Zulu.

"September month 29.

"Sir,—I thank you for your letter; it reached me; I heard it, all its story. But, sir, there is a thing which I was wishing to tell you clearly, to wit, that in fact as to the doing of the people, I don't wish to worry myself to no-purpose, with the plentiful talk which comes from the people, white and black, of ours. 'Sobantu has gone astray; he is condemned; he has no truth.' About these matters, sir, they make my heart sink. I even left off to urge myself on about my work of teaching. I left it, beginning in May month 14 until to-day, September month 29. However, as to that unwillingness of mine my people trouble me much, saying I have forsaken them. But in all that I am looking for your return, because truly I put all my trust in all your teaching of me. It was that which gave me strength to know thoroughly our Father Unkulunkulu, who is over all. Sir, I supplicate blessing for you from our Father above; may He confirm you in that truth in which you confirm (others). And I too myself still hold fast that truth which I received from you, to wit, we are Unkulunkulu's. He knows us. All that I received from you, that is what I stand by—I mean to know Him,—I mean to trust in Him, —every thing of that kind.

"I supplicate for your blessing entirely, saying, "May He who is over all stand with you, deliver you, grant you (grace) in England, bring you to Natal!' for that truly is our glory, our wealth, that your return, Sir, Sobantu beloved. But, Sir, the thing which I don't understand is, your fighting with the white people, to wit, what are you fighting about? For, if it is that which I know of, *they* ought to believe, and leave you to return."

Bishop Gray says repeatedly in his Journal, "What shall we do with this poor fellow?" I am afraid there is no hope for him: he is incurably bitten with the simple love of the truth; and what is worse, there are others, to my certain knowledge, in the same predicament. And who knows on how many other hearts such words as the following may have a dangerous effect, which were spoken by William's brother Jonathan to a class of native converts, living under the shadow of my residence, who have been left for the last three years to instruct

each other, without the aid of an European missionary. They are reported to me by a friend, who very lately visited one Sunday the Station where I live:

"The Sunday before last, I went out and spent at Bishopstowe. There were not many more than twenty (natives) present (in the chapel). I could with difficulty repress my feelings, when I pictured to myself those I had seen there, and whom I hope to see there again. . . . Jonathan preached, and I thought his sermon very clever in some parts, and very interesting in others. I suppose it was your heretical teaching. He spoke of the innate consciousness which every one possesses of what is right and what wrong. He was particularly happy, I thought, in some of his remarks on this point. He said,—'When a man has done a wrong thing in secret, his heart does not wait to find out if any one saw him do it, before pronouncing judgment upon it; but it instantly condemns him. So also, if he has done a meritorious thing in secret, his heart witnesses to the merit and right of it, although no other has seen it.' He said, 'In the nature of things it was so: it was so on earth, and it was so in heaven. Whatever *was right, was right*, and we all bore witness to it, although our learning was but small, or none at all; and the same with that which was wrong.' Then came his amusing —I should rather say interesting—application. I am afraid some would call it 'heretical'. 'And this,' said he, 'is the meaning of the passage, "Whatever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatever ye shall loose, &c." It cannot be otherwise: right is right, and wrong is wrong, in heaven and upon earth; and so it always must be. It is as impossible for it to be otherwise, as it is that men should gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.'"

I think that even Mr. Reade would allow that there is here also some evidence of the good result of "missionary efforts"; and, perhaps, he will think with me that no great harm would be likely to ensue, if what Bishop Gray dreads were really to take place, and a whole school of such teachers should be raised to infect the native mind generally with such teaching. But then the love of Christian men at home must send the first messengers of God's Living Word, to stir the hearts of such men,—to enlighten their understanding, to draw out their powers of thought, to clear their doubts, to answer their questionings.

Yes! those who have had their own hearts warmed with the knowledge of God's Love,—whose souls have realised the truth of their Creator's presence in the midst of his glorious universe,—whose spirits have been wakened to the consciousness of their high vocation, their mighty hope, their august parentage, as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty,—who have known for themselves the blessedness of living, amidst all life's duties, trials, sorrows, in daily communion with God, the Father of spirits, the spring and source of all life, and truth, and love,—such as these cannot be content with having this blessing for themselves alone; they must help in some way to spread the knowledge of God's Love and Truth to others; their own joy would be utterly wanting in one of its chief ingredients, if they did not recog-

nise that the truths, which have refreshed and gladdened their own souls, are meant also for all mankind, and are only first granted to them, that they might each be, in his measure, the ministers of this great joy to others. We are all familiar with the words, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." But, whatever criticism mny do with the text which contains them, whatever outward sanction they may lose or still retain, they must continue always binding as the exposition of a clear human duty. The feelings of common brotherhood with which our God has gifted us, as real though faint reflections of that Great Love with which He embraces us all, would still urge many among us to go forth—personally, or by others sent in our name—to communicate to our brethren in heathen and savage lands those spiritual as well as temporal blessings in which we ourselves rejoice.

I cannot, therefore, allow that "whoever subscribes a guinea to a foreign mission is defrauding some starving Englishman of that guinea." I need not stop to say, what was truly observed on the former occasion, that among those who feel most deeply for the wants of the "starving Englishman", are very many, also, who are most earnest in the support of missionary work. But I do say that this feeling of love for our kind—this sense of the essential brotherhood of the great human family, whether sprung from one first pair or more, whether developed from lower races or not, which binds us all together as beings gifted with reason and conscience, and therefore capable of knowing, loving, and glorifying our Creator, and of loving and honouring each other, as reflecting the image of God,—this spirit, in short, which prompts the missionary to go, and the friends of missions at home to send him, while at the same time they are not found neglecting the calls which God makes upon them in His Providence nearer home at their very doors,—is quite as noble and generous as the spirit of scientific inquiry which carries men into other fields of arduous and patient labour, and which has led, I believe, a recent traveller to risk the dangers of the West African coast in search of our (supposed) ancestral ape.

And as to the expenditure, let us suppose that each Englishman has confined his outlay on his own personal needs, and those of others dependent on him, to what is strictly necessary, and given every farthing of the remainder to help to raise the status of his fellow-countrymen at home of the degraded classes,—not, observe, by mere almsgiving, which is often absolutely pernicious, but by well-considered and well-organised schemes for the improvement of the lower classes. Then will it be time to grudge the few thousands of guineas which go out of the purse of the old country to help her colonists, deprived as they are of those religious advantages which are here at home inherited from the munificence of former ages, that they may live truly human, divinely irradiated, lives, and to raise the multitudes, who hang on the outskirts of civilisation under our rule, to a like condition, instead of having recourse to the somewhat *expensive* process of keeping them down by the sword.

In short, whether this work of brotherly kindness is to be done at